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The Humbling of Carthage.—Foreign Nations oppreſſed by Rome.

From the Year of Rome 552 *to* 620.

CHAP. I.

Wars againſt Philip King of Macedon, and Antiochus King of Syria.

FIVE hundred Carthaginian ſhips delivered to Scipio, and burnt in ſight of Carthage; the maritime power of this great ſtate reduced to ten ſmall gallies; her citizens taxed to pay a ſhameful tribute; the high ſpirited Hannibal compelled to ſubſcribe to the diſgrace of his country, and the memory of former defeats entirely effaced by a ſeries of victories, were the advantages gained by the ſecond Punic war. Every thing concurred to ſwell the Roman pride, by extending the empire of the republic; and the illuſtrious conqueror, who brought them a hundred and twenty thouſand pounds weight of ſilver, was received at Rome with every Carthage humbled.

Triumph of Scipio Africanus.

expreſſion of enthuſiaſtic regard. His triumph was moſt magnificent; and the ſurname of Africanus, which was given to him upon this occaſion, was of all rewards the moſt glorious.

The ambition of Rome increaſes.

From this time the Romans gave free ſcope to their ambition. A thouſand obſtructions had hitherto confined them within the bounds of Italy; but, like a torrent which had burſt its mound, they now ruſhed forth to overwhelm the ſurrounding nations. Former ſucceſs inſpired them with an eager deſire after new victories; every acquiſition ſerved to inflame their minds with a love of conqueſt; and the immenſe wealth which they acquired by reducing their enemies, ſupplied them with the means of ſucceeding in new wars. The moſt moderate people could ſcarcely have reſtrained the progreſs of their enterpriſes in ſimilar circumſtances; but what nation was ever leſs moderate than the Romans, when they hoped to add to the greatneſs of the republic?

552. War againſt Philip II. king of Macedon.

I ſhall paſs over ſome expeditions againſt the Gauls and revolted Spaniards, that we may come to the war with Macedon. It was but a few years before, that Philip II. king of Macedon, had concluded a general peace, in which Rome cauſed her allies to be comprehended. Since that time this reſtleſs prince had aſſiſted the Carthaginians, and diſturbed the Greeks by new attempts. Attalus king of Pergamus, the Rhodians, and the Athenians, ſent ambaſſadours to Rome to complain of Philip. As the people were deſirous of it, war was immediately declared againſt him, and the deciſion did not remain long in ſuſpenſe: Philip was defeated the firſt campaign by Sulpicius the conſul. Quintius Flaminius (or Flamininus) the proconſul gained a deciſive victory over him near Cynocephalé in Theſſaly, where the inconvenience of the heavy Macedonian phalanx in an uneven country, was very evidently demonſtrated. This victory produced a peace, which coſt the king a tribute of a thouſand talents, beſides being obliged to deliver up all his ſhips; and for the faithful performance, his ſon Demetrius was given as hoſtage.

556. He is defeated by Flaminius and conſents to pay a tribute.

At

At the celebration of the Iſthmian games, a decree of the ſenate and Roman people was publiſhed by the proconſul, declaring that the Greek cities, which had been under the dominion of the king of Macedon, were thereby reſtored to liberty. The whole aſſembly joined in acclamations. They admired, they extolled a warlike benevolent people, whoſe ſole aim in all their exploits was to reſtore liberty to mankind. Stupid joy! Empty praiſe! We ſhall ſee by and by whether the Greeks had reaſon to applaud themſelves for having invited the Romans into their country. Greece was, in a languiſhing ſtate before ſhe became acquainted with the Roman name, that fatal name, which foreboded her approaching ſlavery.

Liberty reſtored in appearance to the Greek cities.

The Etolians, an intractable people, who had greatly contributed to the late victory, already accuſed the Romans of a breach of faith, becauſe they kept two towns of the country in their poſſeſſion; but Nabis, tyrant of Sparta, very ſoon had greater reaſon to complain. During the war, Flaminius had been in treaty with him, but when that was at an end, he was no longer looked upon as an ally; the conſul attacked him as a tyrant, with a deſign to compel him to reſign Argos, and having beſieged him in Sparta, preſcribed the terms of peace, which left him in poſſeſſion of his own territories, after the Argians were reſtored to freedom. Undoubtedly the Romans foreſaw that the ſtates of Greece being rendered independent, free to govern themſelves by their own laws, and divided into a number of ſmall republics, would become an eaſier prey; they therefore affected to aſſiſt them in preſerving their liberty; but this zeal for Grecian freedom was only a means for reducing them on the firſt favourable opportunity, which the Etolians ſaw through, and immediately ſolicited the aſſiſtance of a protector.

The Etolians and Nabis king of Sparta accuſed the Romans of breach of faith.

Antiochus the Great, king of Syria, the fifth in ſucceſſion from Seleucus, was the enemy whom the Etolians ſtirred up to oppoſe the Romans. Hannibal, perſecuted by the reſtleſs ambition of that republic, had ta-

561. Antiochus king of Syria declares againſt the

Romans, but declines to follow the advice of Hannibal.

ken ſhelter at his court; for while that hero was employed in reforming the abuſes, and endeavouring to repair the misfortunes of his country, they inſiſted upon having him delivered up to them. Still more exaſperated againſt his old enemies, if Antiochus had placed that confidence in him of which he was truly deſerving, he might perhaps have amply revenged the cauſe of Carthage. Hannibal adviſed that monarch to form an alliance with the king of Macedon, and to carry the war into Italy; but neither of theſe advices was attended to, and as every thing was conducted imprudently, of courſe nothing that was attempted could ſucceed.

The prudent policy of Rome to procure reſources.

The Romans, on the other hand, procured the moſt inexhauſtible reſources from their conſummate policy. Their ambaſſadours were employed in Aſia and in Greece, to inſtil ſuſpicions of Hannibal, and to enter into an alliance with Eumenes, ſon of Attalus, king of Pergamus; they ſecured Philip and the Achean league, which was ſtill glorioufly ſupported by Philopœmen; they preſerved the friendſhip of the Greeks, to whom the bare name of liberty was every thing; in a word, they took their meaſures with ſuch prudence, that we need not be ſurpriſed at their ſpeaking to the powerful monarch of Syria in the tone of ſuperiority.

State of the kingdom of Syria.

This kingdom was ſtill the greateſt of all that had been diſmembered from the vaſt empire of Alexander; but the Seleucidæ, in their ſolicitude to reduce Egypt, had neglected the moſt important cares of government; and beſides, by ſucceeding to the power, they adopted the effeminate manners, of the Perſians. The Romans were to them what the Macedonians had been to Darius. Almoſt all the revolutions which have happened in the world, have originated from ſimilar cauſes.

562. Miſconduct of Antiochus.

The haughty Antiochus ſhewed as great a love of pleaſure at the breaking out of this war, as the Etolians manifeſted military ardour. Being maſter of the iſle of Eubæa, while he was at Chalcis, he very ſoon forgot the purpoſe of his expedition; though fifty years of age, fell diſtractedly in love with a young girl, whom he married,

and

and, ſunk in the boſom of pleaſure, ſuffered military diſcipline to be totally neglected. He was ſuddenly informed that Acilius, the conſul, was advancing againſt him with the greateſt ſpeed, which made him haſten to take poſſeſſion of the paſs at Thermopylæ, from whence he ſent to deſire ſuccours from the Etolians, as his troops were not yet arrived from Aſia. The Romans arrived; and Cato, the lieutenant of the conſul, who had borne that office himſelf, ſeized upon the ſummit of the defile, by the ſame path which Xerxes and Brennus had formerly taken, poured down upon the enemy, put them in diſorder, and the victory was completed by Acilius. Antiochus ſaved himſelf by flight, with about five hundred men, and Eubæa was retaken. The Etolians, after a vigorous defence, loſt Heraclea their capital. Lamia was taken from them by Philip, and being beſieged in Naupactus, they begged a truce, that they might make their ſubmiſſion to Rome, and it was granted; but their deputies refuſing to ſubmit to the will of the ſenate, which however was not explained to them, they were ordered to quit Rome that very day. Here we find the Romans moſt deſpotic tyrants.

563. L. Scipio with his brother Africanus ſet out to put an end to the war.

L. Scipio, a new conſul, ſet out to finiſh the war, attended by his brother, Scipio Africanus. That great man had deſired leave to ſerve under his brother. In their march through the dominions of the king of Macedon, they, in the name of the Roman people, remitted to him the remainder of the tribute he was to have paid: they reſtored his ſon Demetrius, and in his humiliation he was made ſenſible that his ſervices were rewarded. Antiochus trembled for his fate in Aſia, the more ſo, as the loſs of a naval engagement foreboded new misfortunes; and inſtead of bravely defending the coaſts of the Helleſpont, withdrew his army, by which means Aſia was expoſed to the Romans, who being reſolved to eſtabliſh their power in that country, rejected all propoſals of accommodation. The king therefore unwillingly determined to hazard an engagement; and with an army of eighty thouſand men, and fifty four elep[h]ants

Antiochus entirely defeated at Magneſia in Ionia.

elephants, againſt thirty thouſand men, he was entirely defeated by the conſul near Magneſia, and fled all the way to Antioch, from whence he ſent to ſue for a peace.

Hard terms impoſed by the Romans.

Scipio Africanus, declaring the reſolutions of the council to the ambaſſadours, ſaid—"That the Romans did "not ſuffer themſelves to be depreſſed by adverſity, or "elated by proſperity; that they were willing to grant "the ſame terms after gaining a victory, which they had "demanded before the engagement; that Antiochus "muſt evacuate all Aſia to the weſt of mount Taurus, "pay the whole expenſe of the war, valued at fifteen "thouſand talents, and give twenty hoſtages, &c." And beſides, to remove all cauſe of diſtruſt, he was to deliver up Hannibal, and Thoas the Etolian. Theſe conditions were accepted; and Hannibal, wandering from aſylum to aſylum, the conſtant object of Roman perſecution, at laſt died in the dominions of Pruſias, king of Bithynia, the enemy of Eumenes.

Hannibal perſecuted by their hatred.

How the Romans rewarded their allies, Eumenes and the Rhodians.

The Rhodians, who had performed eminent ſervices in the courſe of the war, ſent deputies to Rome, to procure the liberty of the Grecian cities in Aſia. Eumenes, whoſe alliance had been equally uſeful, ſent ambaſſadours to demand the ſpoils of Antiochus. This was a ſubject of ſuch a delicate nature as to require the moſt mature deliberation. Policy required that the kings their allies ſhould be indulged; but glory demanded that they ſhould behave in the ſame manner to the Greeks in Aſia, as to thoſe in Europe; however, at laſt they found a means to ſatisfy both Eumenes and the Rhodians. They gave him Lycaonia, Phrygia and Myſia; to the others they decreed Lycia, with a part of Caria and Piſidia, ſecuring the freedom of thoſe cities that enjoyed it before the defeat of Antiochus. There was ſomething grand in making gifts of provinces; but it would have been much more noble to have ſecured the freedom of all Greece, as they affected to promiſe. Rome dazzled the whole world, but in fact only fought with a view of aggrandizing her own empire.

They acted only from motives of ambition.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Cato the Cenſor.—War againſt Perſia.—Injuſtice and Ambition of the Romans, &c.

THIS war, which procured the name of Aſiaticus to L. Scipio, yet proved fatal to the Romans, whoſe ſimple and auſtere manners were very ſoon corrupted by all the vices uſually attendant on the poſſeſſion of wealth. By acquiring a reliſh for the pleaſures of Aſia, a life of virtue was no longer agreeable; and in the boſom of proſperity the ſeeds of every evil ſprung up. Muſt all nations in this reſpect reſemble one another?

The Romans begun to be corrupted in Aſia.

If it had been poſſible to check the progreſs of this growing miſchief, it might have been done by the famous Cato, a perſon of conſular dignity, a zealous friend to rural employments and frugality, and the declared enemy of every ſpecies of luxury; but whoſe economy was charged with being the effect of avarice, and whoſe character of inflexible ſeverity and vehement temper, made him incapable of reſtraining himſelf within proper bounds.

Exceſſive ſeverity of Cato the Cenſor.

In the year 558, he with exceſſive zeal oppoſed the annulliug of the Oppian law, which did not permit the Roman ladies to wear more than half an ounce of gold in their dreſs, and prohibited the uſe of chariots and clothes of different colours. This law was enacted at the time that Hannibal was laying waſte the country of Italy, and threatening the deſtruction of Rome. When the war with Carthage was at an end, the motive for paſſing the law no longer exiſted, the women therefore uſed all their influence to have it annulled; and in ſpite of the moſt furious railings of Cato, who was then conſul, they carried their point. The paſſion for dreſs which is natural to the ſex, had not at that time degenerated into ruinous oſtentation: the ladies, deſirous of being diſtinguiſhed from the common people, only laid claim to their ancient privileges, and the liberty of indulging

His zeal for the Oppian law againſt the dreſs of the ladies

indulging in the uſe of their own property. Cato foreſaw the conſequences of luxury, and foretold the abuſes and deſtructive exceſs to which they were haſtening: But, could not theſe be prevented by ſome more gentle means? or, could he expect that they would always continue to lead a life of poverty after they were become opulent?

566. He cauſes Scipio Africanus to be accuſed unjuſtly.

It is not poſſible to find an excuſe for his hatred againſt the two Scipios, nor for the manner in which it was diſplayed. His firſt blow was levelled againſt Africanus, who at his inſtigation was accuſed, by two of the tribunes, before the people, of having, among other things, allowed himſelf to be bribed by Antiochus. The noble Africanus made his appearance on the day deſtined for trial, and, diſdaining to offer any vindication of himſelf, tore in pieces the accounts. *On ſuch a day as this*, ſaid he, *I conquered Hannibal and Carthage; follow me, O ye Romans, to the Capitol, and let us return thanks to the immortal gods.* He was followed by the whole aſſembly, and his accuſers left in amazement. Having received another ſummons, this great man retired to his houſe in the country, where he died at forty ſeven years of age. He poſſeſſed a degree of merit almoſt unknown to his country. To all the qualities of a great hero, he added a love of learning, and the moſt agreeable manners; and ought to be regarded as the chief model by which the Romans formed themſelves.

He cauſes Scipio Aſiaticus to be unjuſtly condemned.

After his death, Cato proſecuted his brother Aſiaticus with the ſame animoſity, and let looſe againſt him the ſame accuſers. He cauſed the conqueror of Antiochus to be condemned to pay a heavy fine for having received an immenſe ſum of money from that prince, in order to obtain for him favourable terms of peace; but when his whole property was ſeized, there was not the leaſt veſtige of corruption to be found, nay, not enough to diſcharge the fine. At laſt, his innocence was acknowledged, and an atonement made for the iniquitous ſentence. Sempronius Gracchus, though a tribune of the people, boldly defended the two brothers; he was

rewarded

rewarded by obtaining the famous Cornelia, the daughter of Scipio Africanus, in marriage. We ſhall ſee her children acting a very important part in the affairs of the republic.

In the office of cenſor he goes beyond all bounds.

Cato gave vent to the bitterneſs of his own gall, and to the indulgence of perſonal enmity, under the maſk of a rigid zeal, which flattered the paſſions of the people. Being raiſed to the office of cenſor, he diſcharged the duties like a mercileſs reformer, though his own private conduct was by no means unexceptionable. He degraded a ſenator for having only ſaluted his wife in the preſence of his daughters. Without aſſigning any reaſon, he excluded Scipio Africanus from the order of knights, into which he had entered after his diſgrace, and reduced him to a level with the loweſt citizen. He condemned all who wore any ſuperfluous ornament. By theſe means he impoſed upon the ſhort ſighted populace, who are always pleaſed with that exceſſive ſeverity of manners which is ſo ſuited to their own condition. They decreed a ſtatue to him; and ſo great was his credit, that though he was tried no leſs than forty four different times, he was always acquitted. Whatever was the merit of Cato the cenſor, he was more indebted for his influence to popular prejudice than to his own deſert. It is thus that the multitude are governed by enthuſiaſts.

He renders himſelf agreeable to the people by theſe means.

Diſcovery of a debauched ſociety.

Beſides, ſuch was the univerſal corruption of morals, that the ſevereſt remedies were become neceſſary. In 567, two years before Cato was choſen cenſor, the conſuls diſcovered an abominable ſociety formed in different places, who on pretence of celebrating the feaſts of Bacchus, were guilty of the moſt ſhameful diſorders. About ſeven thouſand of both ſexes were concerned, of whom numbers were put to death, and the reſt either fled or killed themſelves. However, the abolition of the Bacchanalia did not ſtem the torrent of vice.

The ambition of Rome diſguiſed un-

The Romans entered into new wars, in which their ambition was more and more diſplayed. The language of a decree in favour of the Statyellæ, a people of Liguria,

der ſpecious pretences.

guria, is worthy of admiration—*Victory is glorious, when it is ſatisfied with the reduction of an enemy; but becomes hateful when it proves oppreſſive to the miſerable.* If this equitable maxim had been attended to by the Romans, they would not have been reproached with having ſeldom behaved to their enemies with moderation, except when their political views required it; or of having been ingenious in finding pretences for ſubjecting thoſe nations to whom they declared themſelves friends. Their hiſtory is nothing but a ſeries of acts of injuſtice more or leſs diſguiſed.

Commotions raiſed by Perſeus, king of Macedonia, againſt the Romans.

A new ſtorm threatened Macedonia. Philip, who hated the Romans to the laſt, without being able to wipe away the ſhame of the battles he had loſt, had been a few years dead, after putting to death his ſon Demetrius, whom he had formerly ſent as hoſtage to Rome on a falſe accuſation brought by his brother Perſeus, who was afraid that the protection of the Romans, and the perſonal merit of Demetrius, would deprive him of the crown. Perſeus, having by this enormous villainy ſucceeded to the throne of his father, moſt imprudently gave a looſe to the hatred he had conceived againſt the Romans, and making preparations himſelf endeavoured to prevail upon the Grecian ſtates to join him; but the Romans being informed of his deſigns by Eumenes, immediately reſolved upon a war. Upon this news, Perſeus offered every kind of ſatisfaction the Romans choſe to demand; but the ſenate told his ambaſſadours, that one of the conſuls was ready to march into Macedonia, and if the king had any good intentions he might treat upon the ſpot, for they were reſolved to liſten to no propoſals but with their arms in their hands.

582. They declare war againſt him.

Though the Romans were defeated, they wanted to give law to the Macedonians.

The conſul Licinius very ſoon arrived, and the king, after gaining a victory, offered to conclude a peace upon the terms which had been granted to his father; but here the Roman ſteadineſs appeared in the faireſt light; for Licinius, though vanquiſhed, boldly declared, that Perſeus ſhould not obtain peace but by yielding up his

kingdom

kingdom to the diſcretion of the Romans. An obſtinate and inflexible firmneſs at length triumphed over every obſtacle. That prince, who, beſides his being cruel, avaricious, and timid, was incapable of gaining allies to ſupport his intereſt, or of making himſelf formidable to his enemies, was totally defeated the fourth year of the war by Paulus Emilius. The Macedonian phalanx was routed, by attacking it on all ſides with platoons, in proportion as it happened to be driven into diſorder by its movements, which was the only means of breaking it. Perſeus fled, and being abandoned by his ſubjects, ſurrendered to the conqueror. He walked in a mourning habit before the triumphal car at Rome, where he died in captivity. The Macedonians were declared free, but the kingdom of Macedonia was added to the number of Roman provinces.

585. Perſeus taken priſoner by Paulus Emilius.

Macedonia reduced.

This conqueſt ought to be aſcribed equally to the valour and prudence of Paulus Emilius. Being adviſed by Scipio Naſica to engage the enemy ſooner than was proper, who alledged that the delay would be imputed to cowardice—*At your age I ſpoke as you do*, replied he; *but at mine, you will act as I do.* After having enriched the ſtate, he continued to live in the greateſt moderation; and Cicero could not add more to his praiſe when he ſaid, *that he carried nothing to his home but immortal honour.* Two of his ſons were carried off by ſudden deaths; and when he was afterward haranguing the people, he declared, that he would cheerfully ſubmit to this misfortune, provided the gods would deign to avert the evils with which the republic was threatened by ſuch a flow of ſucceſs. The ſentiment of a truly wiſe man, who knows how fatal a poiſon is proſperity, not only to individuals, but likewiſe to ſocieties and empires! In fact, Rome was ruined by her victories.

Prudence and virtue of Paulus Emilius.

Greece was very ſoon made ſenſible of the weight of the Roman yoke. The fierce Etolians procured a peace upon the hardeſt terms. They were compelled always to ſerve under the generals of the republic, and never to aſſiſt her enemies or thoſe of her allies, and to pay a tri-

The Etolians reduced and obliged to pay a tribute.

bute

bute of five hundred talents in the ſpace of ſix years. This was the puniſhment of their attempts. And it was with a jealous eye that Rome ſtill ſaw the Achean league continue to preſerve ſome remains of liberty.

After the death of Philopœmen the Achean league no longer ſupported.

Philopœmen, who had been called the laſt of the Greeks, was lately dead. Leſs moderate than his model Epaminondas, he had compelled the Spartans to join the Achean league, after having aboliſhed the laws of Lycurgus, and committed a number of outrages. Having been taken priſoner and poiſoned by the Meſſenian rebels, the Acheans had no leader to conduct them; and in theſe circumſtances the Roman ſenate ſet themſelves up as judges of a free people, diſperſed ſuch citizens as they chiefly ſuſpected, and thus prepared for the total ſubjection of Greece, to whoſe misfortune the ruin of Perſeus was a prelude, there being no barrier left againſt the ambition of theſe inſatiable conquerors.

Deſpotic behaviour of the Romans to Syria.

But the Roman character is diſcovered in nothing ſo much as in their behaviour to Syria. Popilius Læna, in the name of the ſenate, forbid Antiochus Epiphanes the uſurper to attempt any conqueſt in Egypt, and having drawn a circle round that monarch—*Before you ſtir out of this*, ſaid he, *you muſt give an anſwer to the ſenate.* Antiochus replied, that he would obey. He ſent ambaſſadours to Rome, who were haughtily told, *that their maſter was congratulated upon his having given a proof of his obedience.* After the death of that prince in 589, they excluded Demetrius the lawful heir from the crown, in favour of Antiochus Eupator, the ſon of Epiphanes, whoſe infancy left their ambitious views without reſtraint. They declared Eupator the ward of the republic without even deigning to conſult the Syrians, and ſent three members of the ſenate to manage the government, in quality of guardians, with inſtructions to weaken the kingdom as much as poſſible. Rome plainly aimed at the conqueſt of the world, to which the deſtruction of Carthage paved the way.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The Third Punic War.—The Romans deſtroy Carthage, Corinth, and Numantia.

THE old king Maſſiniſſa, having for a conſiderable time been entirely devoted to the Romans, and ſecure of their protection, ſeized ſome lands which belonged to the territory of Carthage, and commiſſioners were ſent from Rome to decide the diſpute. Cato was one of the number; who, at his return, gave an alarming picture of the ſtrength of the Carthaginians; declared, that they were arming againſt the republic; and inceſſantly repeated, that Carthage muſt be deſtroyed. Scipio Naſica, a man of more moderation and prudence, always contended againſt this ſentiment, as being both violent and hazardous. But the king of Numidia having obliged the Carthaginians to arm for their own preſervation, Naſica, whoſe mediation had put an end to the diſpute, being inſulted by the populace of Carthage, and the war being rekindled between Maſſiniſſa and that nation, it was impoſſible but that Rome would at laſt ſeize the opportunity to eſtabliſh her dominion in Africa.

The diſputes between Maſſiniſſa and the Carthaginians lead to the third Punic war.

She ſent ambaſſadours under a pretence of reſtoring peace, but in fact, to watch favourable conjunctures for their own purpoſes. The Carthaginians were defeated by Maſſiniſſa in a great battle; and his ſon Gulaſſa maſſacred fifty eight thouſand men who had laid down their arms; upon which the ambaſſadours, throwing off the maſk, declared war againſt the vanquiſhed. A moſt deteſtable conduct, which was followed by tranſactions ſtill more infamous.

604. Rome declares war againſt the Carthaginians, after they were defeated by Maſſiniſſa.

The terrified Carthaginians attempted to ward off the blow, by making the moſt humble ſubmiſſions; and even offered to acknowledge themſelves the ſubjects of Rome. The Roman ſenate promiſed to leave them their liberty, on condition that they ſhould perform whatever was required of them by the conſuls, and that they ſhould ſend three hundred hoſtages. Upon this

They diſarm them on pretence of granting a peace.

they

they gave a looſe to the tranſports of joy, as if they had nothing to apprehend, and in perfect confidence ſent the hoſtages, though a few of the moſt intelligent ſenators ſuſpected ſome treachery. In the mean time the conſuls Marcius and Manilius arrived, at the head of a powerful army, and in a moſt ſplendid manner received the deputies of Carthage, who came to know their intentions, and to complain of ſuch an hoſtile preparation.—*You are now under the protection of Rome*, ſaid the conſuls, *and have no longer occaſion for thoſe arms with which your magazines are filled; let them be brought to us as a proof of your ſincerity.* They remonſtrated in vain that Carthage was ſurrounded with enemies, and that arms were neceſſary for their protection.—*Rome has undertaken to defend you; therefore obey.* This anſwer left them without any reply, and they ſubmitted. Could they have ſuſpected the moſt infernal treachery?

They command the Carthaginians to leave their country.

When the Carthaginians were ſtript of their arms and inſtruments of war, the conſuls were not aſhamed to declare, that their city muſt be deſtroyed; but that they might ſettle elſewhere, though without any fortification, and at leaſt ten miles diſtant from the ſea. This thunder ſtroke, by driving them to deſpair, revived their courage. The people maſſacred thoſe ſenators by whoſe advice their arms had been delivered, and they began to forge others with incredible ardour. Palaces and temples were converted into work ſhops; gold, ſilver, vaſes and ſtatues ſupplied the want of braſs and iron; the women ſacrificed their ornaments, and even cut off their hair to make cordage. The Romans, perſuaded that a city without arms could make no reſiſtance, made an attack and were repulſed, and their fleet was reduced to aſhes by the Carthaginian fireſhips.

Their courage revived by deſpair.

Scipio Emilianus ſaves the Roman army, and gains great reputation.

Aſdrubal, the Carthaginian general, would have cut the conſular army in pieces if they had not been protected by Scipio Emilianus, the ſon of Paulus Emilius, and grandſon by adoption of Scipio Africanus, of whoſe great merit he was a worthy rival. That hero, with three hundred horſe, covered the retreat of the Roman legions,

legions, while they paſſed a river in ſight of the victorious enemy. His behaviour and exploits even wreſted an encomium from old Cato, who had never before commended any man; but, though he praiſed Scipio, his gall was diſcharged againſt the other officers. If Cato never praiſed any one before that time, can we look upon himſelf as being praiſeworthy?

This important war was to be decided by Scipio, who, though he was but thirty ſeven years of age, and the Villian law, which had paſſed ſome time before, had decreed that no perſon could be elected conſul till forty three years of age, yet he was not only choſen conſul, but, without drawing lots, as was the cuſtom, had Africa aſſigned for his department. He very ſoon did credit to their choice, for Carthage was blocked up and reduced to famine. The Carthaginians offered to ſubmit to any terms the Romans choſe to preſcribe, provided that their city might be preſerved; but Scipio, not having it in his power to prefer humanity to revenge, was obliged to reject their offers.

606. He is charged with carrying on the war as conſul.

The Romans, by means of a falſe attack, got poſſeſſion of one of the gates, and, entering the city, ſet fire to the houſes, and put all who oppoſed them to the ſword. The haughty Aſdrubal baſely ſtooped to beg his life; while his high ſpirited wife, loading him with reproaches, ſtabbed her children, and threw herſelf headlong into the flames. The city was given up to be pillaged; and Scipio, who obeyed the cruel mandates of the ſenate with the utmoſt regret, deſtroyed it entirely by fire, which continued burning ſeventeen days.

607. He takes & deſtroys Carthage.

A ſplendid triumph, and the ſurname of Africanus, crowned the expedition of the proconſul, for the year of his conſulſhip was expired. He was ſeconded in this war by his friend Lælius, the ſon of the friend of the firſt Scipio Africanus, and by Polybius the hiſtorian, a man worthy to record his heroic actions.

Lælius & Polybius.

At ſight of ſuch a flouriſhing city given up to ſlaughter, and buried in flames, whatever cenſure the Carthaginians might have deſerved, it is impoſſible to withhold

The Romans ſanctified all the fury of war.

a juſt indignation againſt the Romans. But what above all ſhocks human nature is, to ſee them ſanctifying all the horrours of war by religious ceremonies. They ſolemnly devoted their enemies to the infernal gods, and Scipio performed the ceremony. The form which he pronounced is extraordinary—*O dreadful Pluto, let terrour and vengeance looſe againſt the Carthaginians! May the cities and people who have taken up arms againſt us be deſtroyed! To you, O ye furies, in my name, and in the name of the ſenate and Roman people, I devote all the enemies of my republic!* To reſiſt the tyranny of Rome was enough then to be made a victim to the infernal gods! Such imprecations might undoubtedly increaſe the military ardour and confidence of the ſoldiers, but how dreadfully ſhocking muſt they be to a feeling heart!

Imprecation againſt the enemy.

Monteſquieu has clearly explained the cauſes of the ſuperiority which Rome had over Carthage. I ſhall only quote one or two of his reflections. "The Carthaginians (ſaid he) who oppoſed their great wealth to "the Roman poverty, even from that cauſe laboured "under eminent diſadvantages; for gold and ſilver may "be exhauſted, but virtue, conſtancy, ſtrength and "poverty never can. The ambition of the Romans "ſprung from pride, that of the Carthaginians from "avarice. The one were deſirous to command, the "other to accumulate. The laſt, who were always "calculating the profit and the expenſe, carried on war "without loving it. Even the conqueſts of Hannibal "changed the face of that war. Conqueſts are not "difficult, becauſe they are made with the whole force "that can be exerted; but are not eaſily preſerved, be-"cauſe they can be guarded only by a part of it." We may add, that a military people muſt naturally conquer a nation of merchants.

Carthage muſt have ſunk ſooner or later. The reaſon.

This ſame year ſaw the deſtruction of Corinth, and the liberty of Greece totally annihilated. The Romans, whoſe affected moderation degenerated into a ſort of tyranny, when circumſtances put it in their power to

Rome forms a deſign to reduce Greece.

cruſh

cruſh thoſe whom they once careſſed, reckoned it ſound policy to keep up a diviſion among thoſe ſtates, to protect traitors who were of uſe to them, to interpoſe their authority in all diſputes, and gradually to aſſume the ſame power as if they had conquered Greece, inſtead of having declared it free.

The Acheans, whom they had reſpected while it was neceſſary, were diſguſted with this conduct. The Romans, no longer in dread of Macedonia, were deſirous to reduce them. Three adventurers, pretending to be ſons of Perſeus, had ſucceſſively attempted the conqueſt of that kingdom, but were eaſily defeated. Metellus the pretor, having nothing to apprehend from that quarter, turned his arms againſt the Acheans, who had been hurried to the precipice by two violent leaders, Critolaus and Dieus, and defeated them. Mummius the conſul finiſhed the war by ſtorming and deſtroying Corinth, a city which had been built about nine hundred and fifty years, and was one of the moſt flouriſhing in Europe. Greece was reduced to a Roman province under the name of Achaia.

The Acheans take up arms, and are conquered.

Mummius deſtroys Corinth.

Greece made a Roman province.

Rome enriched and decorated herſelf with new ſpoils. The maſter pieces of art which were carried thither, added to the poiſoned fruits of their Aſiatic conqueſts, introduced taſte, which was very ſoon followed by a total corruption of morals. Paterculus relates a remarkable inſtance of the ignorance of Mummius. That general told the people who were charged with the care of conveying the moſt valuable pictures and ſtatues of Corinth to Rome, that if any piece was loſt or ſpoiled, they ſhould be obliged to furniſh one equally good at their own expenſe. The hiſtorian does not heſitate to prefer this ruſtic ignorance as more beneficial to the ſtate, than the refinement of his own times. Mummius, who was as diſintereſted as he was brave, kept nothing for himſelf of all the wealth and rarities that were taken at Corinth: but if his manners, and the manners of his country, had been poliſhed by a taſte for the fine arts, would Corinth have been given up to be deſtroyed by ſword and fire? It

The maſter pieces of art which were carried to Rome introduced a taſte for the fine arts.

If the Romans had acquired a taſte for the arts ſooner, they would have committed fewer barbarities.

It is a great misfortune for ſtates to become corrupted by luxury; but it is worſe when they deſtroy themſelves by barbariſm. Happy is it for men when they can keep between the two extremes, to be virtuous with elegance, poliſhed and enlightened without corruption!

613. Treachery of the Romans in Spain with regard to Viriathus.

Before the war with Carthage was ended, Viriathus, the general of the Luſitanians in Spain, a great commander, ſtirred up different nations to rebel againſt Rome; he was deſirous of founding a kingdom by his conqueſts, and ſucceeded. Having it in his power to deſtroy the Roman army, he was ſatisfied with a treaty of peace which ſecured to him the country he already poſſeſſed, leaving the reſt of Spain to thoſe iniquitous oppreſſors; but they revenged the defeats they had received, by a piece of execrable treachery. Servilius Cæpio, the conſul, procured orders to break the peace, ſuddenly attacked Viriathus, purſued him, and prevailed upon ſome traitors to murder him while he was aſleep.

They violate two treaties they had made with Numantia.

One crime brings on another. The Romans were guilty of the like treachery to Numantia, a conſiderable city in Spain, ſituated upon the Douro. They broke two treaties which they had concluded with that city, and made themſelves abhorred as enemies who had neither honour nor juſtice. The Numantines were reſolved rather to periſh than loſe their liberty; and it was neceſſary to employ a man of abilities to ſubdue them: Scipio Emilianus was therefore choſen conſul, though a recent law forbid the ſame man to be twice elected to that office. The deſtroyer of Carthage reduced Numantia to the laſt extremity; and declared that he would hearken to no propoſals, unleſs the inhabitants yielded up their city, their arms and their perſons. In all the horrours of deſpair and famine, and after having eaten the bodies of the dead, many of them choſe to kill themſelves rather than ſubmit to the Romans. Numantia was deſtroyed, the rebellion was ſuppreſſed; but the Spaniards made new efforts to ſhake off the yoke. So many conqueſts, the produce of ambition,

Scipio is ſent againſt the Numantines.

620. He deſtroys the city.

violence,

violence, profound and iniquitous policy, ſupplied food for thoſe paſſions to which Rome ſoon fell a victim. By tearing herſelf in pieces, ſhe was deſtined to avenge the cruel oppreſſions with which ſhe had inſulted the whole world. Before we purſue the thread of events, let us take notice of ſome particulars which will throw light upon hiſtory.

CHAP. IV.

Obſervations upon the Army, the Manners, the Finances, and Learning, of the Romans.

Strength and exerciſes of the Roman ſoldiers.

MONTESQUIEU makes the following important remark.—"We obſerve," ſays he, "that our "armies at preſent are greatly diminiſhed by exceſſive "fatigue; yet by that very thing, thoſe of Rome were "preſerved. I believe the reaſon is, that they were "kept in conſtant exerciſe, while our ſoldiers paſs inceſ-"ſantly from the ſevereſt toil to extreme idleneſs, which "is of all things the moſt likely to deſtroy them. The "Roman ſoldiers were accuſtomed to march twenty, "ſometimes twenty four miles in five hours, carrying "at the ſame time a weight of ſixty pounds. They "were kept in conſtant practice of running and jump-"ing in armour; in their common exerciſe they carried "ſwords, arrows, and javelins, double the weight of "their ordinary arms; and theſe exerciſes were con-"tinual." (*Vid. Vegetius*, l. 1.) Is it ſurpriſing that ſuch ſoldiers, under ſtrict diſcipline, gained ſo many victories?

Their marches.

Beſides, the military reſources of Rome were inexhauſtible. Some time before the ſecond Punic war, they raiſed ſeven hundred thouſand foot, and ſeventy thouſand horſe, againſt the Gauls. After their being defeated at Cannæ, they ſoon muſtered numerous armies, for every man was a ſoldier. However, there were ſo many citizens deſtroyed by that war, that they were obliged

They had always ſoldiers when they wanted them.

to create a hundred and ſixty ſeven new ſenators, to make up the legal number.

A kind of enthuſiaſm tended to make the Romans invincible.

Principles and ſentiment conduced to render the Romans invincible—"There is nothing ſo powerful," ſays the illuſtrious Monteſquieu, "as a republic where the "laws are obeyed, not from fear or from reaſoning, but "from paſſion, as was the caſe at Rome and Sparta; "for at that time, all the zeal which faction could in- "ſpire, was added to the prudence of an excellent go- "vernment." In fact, a ſort of permanent enthuſiaſm gave life to all the enterpriſes and power of the republic.

Military rewards & puniſhments.

We have ſeen how uſeful military rewards and puniſhments have been, from the earlieſt ages, to ſupport diſcipline and inſpire courage; both of which were prudently diſtributed. Though they inflicted puniſhments, ſuch as the baſtinado, and even death, nothing had ſo powerful an effect as ſhame and diſgrace. All kinds of rewards, variety of crowns, triumphs, ovations, the *ſpolia opima*, derived their value from the honours which accompanied them, till the love of money made riches to be preferred before honour; the natural conſequence of extenſive conqueſts, and the infallible ſign of a ſpeedy decay.

The Porcian law elevated the ſentiments of the people without diſcipline being relaxed.

During the ſecond Punic war, the Porcian law forbid a Roman citizen to be beaten with rods. It was to be expected, that this ſoftening the ſeverity of the ancient laws would inſpire the people with ſentiments ſtill more noble. This law did not extend to the army, where the power of life and death was left in the hands of the general; by which means military diſcipline was preſerved in all its priſtine vigour, while a milder legiſlation animated the people with a ſtill greater love of their country. The Roman ſoldier, obedient to the abſolute commands of his general, retained thoſe elevated ſentiments which naturally flow from the enjoyment of liberty, while he continued in the field; but when he returned to his home, he was ſenſible only of the beneficent power of the laws.

Though

Though it is taken notice of by very few writers, yet to population, which was the effect of ſound morals and a ſacred regard for marriage, Rome chiefly owed her proſperity. Not long after the firſt Punic war, the cenſors, finding the number of citizens greatly diminiſhed, exacted an oath from all that were not married, that they would enter into that ſtate, and only with a view of raiſing ſubjects to the republic. However, that time furniſhed the firſt inſtance of a divorce, though permitted by their earlieſt laws. Carvilius, who loved his wife, repudiated her becauſe of ſterility: but in proportion as the manners of the people became more corrupted, divorces were more frequent. It was then that contracts of marriage were introduced, that women might have their fortunes ſecured in caſe of ſeparation.

Purity of morals adds to population.

Firſt divorce in the ſixth age of Rome.

Contracts of marriage.

It is very extraordinary, that though we find a number of veſtals ſuffering for having violated their vows of virginity in every age, yet in the whole ſpace of five hundred years, notwithſtanding the indulgence of the laws, we hear not of a ſingle inſtance of a divorce: which on the one hand muſt have been owing to the very dangerous temptations to which the veſtals were expoſed; while, on the other, the conjugal union was confirmed by ſound morals.

Numbers of veſtals broke the vow.

Till Paulus Emilius reduced Macedonia by the defeat of Perſeus, and brought immenſe riches to the public treaſury, a tax had always been paid by the people, which was ſettled by the cenſors in proportion to their fortunes; to which, in caſes of neceſſity, extraordinary contributions were added: but from that time, till after the death of Cæſar, they were not ſubjected to pay any tax; duties on merchandiſe, the produce of the lands of the republic, the impoſts levied from the people of Italy and the provinces, compoſed the revenues of Rome. At the end of the firſt Punic war, Livius the cenſor laid the firſt duty upon ſalt, from which he had the name of *Salinator*.

The people did not continue to pay taxes after the reduction of Macedonia.

Rome was chiefly enriched by the mines of Spain. In the time of Polybius, they kept forty thouſand men conſtantly

Spaniſh mines, plunder of the ge-

nerals, tribute from foreign nations.

conſtantly employed in the neighbourhood of Carthagena, from whence they daily received to the amount of two hundred and fifty Attic minæ, which is more than four talents. The plunder brought by their generals continually increaſed the public treaſure, to which was likewiſe added the tribute paid by the moſt opulent nations in the world. Then the oppreſſion and knavery of the public receivers, and the extortions of people in office, begun; then it was that the wealth of individuals introduced pomp and luxury into private houſes, new and imaginary wants and diſorders, which undermined the very foundation of the public weal. It was with great propriety that Scipio Africanus ſaid, while two conſuls were canvaſſing for the department of Spain during the war with Viriathus in 609—*I think that both ſhould be excluded; the one, becauſe he has nothing; and the other, becauſe he never thinks he can have enough.*

Groſs ignorance of the Romans for the firſt five ages.

It was not till after the expedition into Aſia againſt Antiochus that the city was paved. Five hundred years had elapſed before they had any method of meaſuring time. Valerius the conſul brought a ſun dial from Sicily; and it was not till more than a hundred years after, that Scipio Naſica introduced the *clepſydra*, by which the hours were meaſured in the night as well as the day. Every thing but the art of war was in an infant ſtate. Their knowledge of phyſic conſiſted in family recipes, till Archagates, a Greek, came to exerciſe that employment and ſurgery, at the time when Hannibal laid ſiege to Saguntum.

Firſt poets.

Ennius, their firſt poet, the friend of Scipio Africanus, compoſed the Roman hiſtory in verſe, or rather in meaſured proſe. His cotemporary, Nevius, gave the hiſtory of the firſt Punic war in the ſame manner. Theſe were the firſt feeble rays of genius which was to furniſh ſuch excellent maſter pieces to future ages. Here, as elſewhere, we find the ſtudy of poetry cultivated before proſe, and dedicated to the commemoration of events. The ancient ſatire was in a ſtate of barbariſm. Fabius Pictor, conſul of Rome in the year 485, had written

written upon the ſubject of the Roman hiſtory; but his work has not been handed down to us.

It was from their connexion with Greece that the Romans became enlightened, and their taſte and manners refined. Terence and Plautus extricated the Roman ſtage from barbarity. The laſt has more of the *comic power*, the piquant bitter ſalt of Ariſtophanes; but the other, who is ſtill read with the greateſt pleaſure, tranſplanted the Attic elegance of Menander into a native country, where nothing but thorns had been produced, if we may uſe the expreſſion, before the time of theſe two poets. It has been alledged, that Scipio Emilianus and Lælius joined him in the compoſition of his pieces; which is equally an encomium upon them, and upon Terence. Theſe great men were accompanied upon their expeditions by Polybius the hiſtorian, and Panætius the philoſopher. By this time the love of the *belles lettres*, philoſophy, and the ſciences, had cleared off that ſavage ruſt which the Romans had derived from their anceſtors.

A taſte for learning introduced.

Cato the cenſor, though himſelf an hiſtorian and orator, bitterly complained and railed againſt the Greeks whom the young Romans attended for the ſake of improvement. By a law which he paſſed, the rhetoricians & philoſophers were expelled, whom he repreſented as dangerous perſons, and who truly were ſo, when they only taught the art of puzzling reaſon by ſophiſtry, and to give the appearance of truth to falſehood. Under ſuch inſtructors, the Romans could acquire nothing but vice and errour.

Cato rails againſt the rhetoricians & philoſophers.

But what had Cato to apprehend from true philoſophers and men of learning, who deſerved that name? Muſt not Rome have gained by inſtruction? Did not her morals require to be more enlightened and rendered more agreeable to humanity? Had ſhe not occaſion for a knowledge of nature, to get rid of prejudices, to call in the aid of natural philoſophy, aſtronomy, geometry, and all the ſciences? Were not the charms of literature requiſite to ſoften the ſeverity of her character, and make

Learning nevertheleſs was uſeful.

make her a model to the reſt of the world, after having been ſo long an object of terrour? Were not the two Scipios, the conquerors of Carthage, worthy of as high eſteem as the ancient heroes, who were unacquainted with every thing but war and the plough? Would the Varros, Ciceros, Virgils, Horaces, and many others, have rendered their country more illuſtrious than the triumphs of all her generals, if the ſavage maxims of the cenſor had always continued to prevail?

Corruption of manners ought not to be aſcribed to learning.

It is true, we ſhall ſee, that at the very time when learning was in the higheſt eſteem, Rome was overrun with every vice; but this corruption was the conſequence of wealth and grandeur; while learning, far from being the occaſion of the evil, might have furniſhed a remedy. Learning may be abuſed as well as religion, which is a great misfortune, becauſe the object abuſed is in itſelf a great bleſſing.

Remarks upon Cato.

We ſtill have a treatiſe on rural affairs *(De re ruſtica)* written by Cato, which is a valuable proof of the taſte the ancient Romans had for agriculture. If the author had not had ſo great a diſlike to the learning of the Greeks, it is probable that his book would have been ſtill better. He frequently ſaid that there were three things of which he repented; the having let a day ſlip without learning any thing; having truſted his wife with a ſecret; and having gone by ſea when he might have travelled by land. With ſuch a paſſion for learning, how came he to be ſuch a declared enemy to foreign ſciences? He overſtrained every thing, but true wiſdom never overſtrains any thing.

A Roman ſignalized himſelf in every profeſſion.

There is one thing very ſurpriſing to us which yet was very common at Rome; to ſee the ſame man a magiſtrate, a warrior, a judge, and a general; an able pleader, a ſkilful politician, a ſtateſman, and a man of letters, capable of ſignalizing himſelf and being uſeful in all theſe employments. What wonderful men! Surely their education muſt have been very different from ours! How limited the circle in which our talents are confined!

EIGHTH

EIGHTH EPOCHA.

The Gracchi.—The Corruption of the Republic.

From the Year of Rome 620 to the Year 665.

CHAP. I.

The Tribuneſhip of Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, &c.

THE foreign wars in which Rome had been engaged had ſuſpended the diſputes between the ſenate and people, but their original cauſe ſtill ſubſiſted; and tho' the plebeians had gained ſome very eminent advantages, and both conſuls were ſometimes taken from their order, yet the ſituation of the lower people was not the leſs to be pitied. That equilibrium which ſhould be preſerved between the different ranks, was totally deſtroyed by the prodigious inequality of fortune; the riches of the higher orders increaſing the poverty of the lower. The miſchief increaſed in proportion as the paſſions were whetted by opulence. By ſubduing the world, Rome was arrived at that fatal point in which morals had loſt all influence; every barrier was thrown down, and the very foundation of the republic undermined. Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, two men of ſingular merit, attempted a reformation, which circumſtances rendered impracticable: their raſh undertaking was a ſignal thrown out for a civil war, where the public liberty was drowned in Roman blood.

The wretched condition of the people the ſource of their quarrels with the ſenate.

The illuſtrious Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus, the mother of theſe two brothers, had given them the very beſt education: to the great qualities of the ſoul, they added all the improvements of a cultivated underſtanding, but more particularly the ſtudy of eloquence, ſo well calculated to govern the multitude. Tiberius, who

The two Gracchi and their mother Cornelia.

who was brother in law of Scipio Emilianus, and ſon in law of Appius Claudius, a perſon of conſular dignity, had acquired the higheſt reputation both civil and military, when the office of tribune of the people opened a way for his zeal or his ambition to enter that career in which he was afterwards to fall. According to ſome writers, his mother Cornelia inſpired him with the deſign of oppoſing the nobles of Rome, by ſaying, *Why am I called the mother in law of Scipio, and not the mother of the Gracchi? Is not your name ſufficiently illuſtrious? It depends upon you to make it ſo.* A love of glory undoubtedly might be excited by theſe expreſſions; but it is very much to be queſtioned, if an imprudent reſolution could have been ſuggeſted to him by Cornelia. Seeing the whole country in poſſeſſion of the wealthy, and inhabited only by their ſlaves; the exceſs of riches on the one hand, and wretched poverty on the other; a deſire of reſtoring Rome to her ancient virtue; in one word, a ſpirit of patriotiſm, probably led him to the attempt; and perhaps engaging at firſt with all the warmth of a good citizen, he perſiſted in it with all the violence of the leader of a faction. Eager zeal, even for the cauſe of the public, ſhould be attentively reſtrained, leſt it degenerate into deſtructive paſſion.

Project of Tiberius Gracchus againſt the nobility.

For more than two hundred and fifty years, the Licinian law had been totally neglected and deſpiſed. So far from being ſatisfied with five hundred *jugera* of land, the patricians had uſurped a conſiderable part of that belonging to the republic; and the wealthy extended their poſſeſſions beyond all reaſonable bounds. Theſe lands, which were formerly inhabited by the firſt nobles and moſt virtuous men of Rome, were now poſſeſſed only by ſlaves, employed to cultivate them for their maſters, and exempted, nay, even excluded from ſerving in the army; while nothing but indigence was the portion of the people who were deſtined to protect their country. Such heavy grievances ſeemed inſufferable in a republican ſtate, but the moſt attentive caution was needful to effect a reformation.

All the lands in the poſſeſſion of the wealthy.

Tiberius

Tiberius Gracchus propoſed to reſtore the Licinian law to its former vigour, but with this proviſo, that all which the wealthy poſſeſſed, above five hundred *jugera*, ſhould be paid for out of the public treaſury. The patricians exclaimed againſt the propoſal, and inſiſted upon the antiquity of their poſſeſſion, and the inconveniences ariſing from the introduction of novelty. The greater the oppoſition, the more did the tribune endeavour to animate the people. *The wild beaſts*, ſaid he, *have their dens, but the citizens of Rome, who are called the maſters of the world, have not a roof to hide their heads, nor a foot of land for a burying place.*

620. Tiberius propoſes to revive the Licinian law.

The patricians, foreſeeing the effects which ſuch language would produce, had recourſe to their uſual policy, and gained over one of the tribunes, who, by his oppoſition, could ſtop the whole proceedings. Tiberius was exceſſively aſtoniſhed, to ſee Octavius, who had hitherto been his friend, employing his power of tribune to oppoſe him. After having, in vain, made every attempt to recover him to his party; after the moſt affectionate invitations; after the moſt animated controverſy, but without the leaſt ill nature on either ſide, he entreated the people, either to depoſe him or Octavius. This bold propoſal ſucceeded to his wiſhes; the Licinian law was revived, and he, his brother Caius, and his father in law Appius, were appointed commiſſioners to ſee it put in execution.

He ſucceeds in ſpite of every oppoſition.

If Tiberius had reſted here, he would have probably rendered his work complete; but he ruined himſelf by puſhing the patricians to extremity. He not only added to this law, that the lands of the republic which had been uſurped ſhould be reſumed, but as there was not a ſufficient fund to ſatisfy all the poor, he diſtributed among them the treaſures of Eumenes, king of Pergamus, who had bequeathed his kingdom and riches to the Roman republic. And laſtly, to ſave himſelf from the reſentment of his enemies, though contrary to rule, he required that he might be continued in the tribuneſhip, alledging that his life was in danger, and intereſting the people in his preſervation. Upon

He diſguſts the patricians by new attempts.

Violence of the ſenators.

Upon this the ſenators were reſolved to uſe violent meaſures, and went up to the capitol, where the aſſembly was held. Tiberius, being warned of his danger, put his hand to his head, which was the ſignal agreed upon for his entreating the protection of his friends. His enemies ſuppoſed that he was aſking a diadem, and that the people were going to beſtow it, of which they informed the ſenate. Minucius Scevola, the conſul, attempted in vain to quiet the minds of the people; but Scipio Naſica, a couſin german of the tribune, cried out —*Since we are betrayed by the conſul, let every good citizen follow me.* He ran out, followed by a crowd of ſenators, who were joined by their clients armed with clubs. Tiberius was knocked down and killed, with about three hundred of his friends. An example the more dreadful, as till that time no Roman blood had ever been ſpilt in any ſedition. The ſenate, forgetting their former moderation, becauſe they had loſt their ancient manners, juſtified what was done; and, to protect Naſica from the vengeance of the people, ſent him on an embaſſy into Aſia, where he died.

Tiberius and his friends killed.

Scipio Emilianus inſulted for having approved of the murder.

So great was the averſion of the nobles againſt Tiberius Gracchus, that even Scipio Emilianus, his brother in law, approved of the murder, ſuppoſing that the tribune wanted to ſow diſcord in the republic. Being inſulted by the populace upon that account—*What would have become of you, ye wretched people*, cried he, *if it had not been for my father, Paulus Emilius, and me? You would be the ſlaves of your enemies. Is this the way you behave to your deliverers?* The people returned to a ſenſe of their duty; but the hero, with his friend Lælius, withdrew from Rome to enjoy his country ſeat at Cajeta in tranquillity.

He retires from Rome.

He returns to oppoſe Carbo the tribune.

However, he returned to oppoſe the ſeditious purpoſe of Carbo the tribune, who propoſed a law for continuing the tribunes in office during the pleaſure of the people, without a new election. This law was rejected; but as the diſturbances continued about the partition of lands, Scipio was on the point of being named dictator

in

in the year 624, when he was found dead in his bed. Metellus, who was the great rival of his glory, was ſincerely afflicted for the loſs, and ſaid to his children—*Go and aſſiſt at the funeral of the greateſt man Rome ever produced; you will never ſee his like again.*

His death.

In the mean time Caius Gracchus, who was as virtuous, as zealous, and more eloquent than Tiberius, having for ſome years concealed his vaſt deſigns in retirement, at length entered into the road of honours. Notwithſtanding the fears and diſſuaſions of Cornelia, he aimed at the tribuneſhip, and was choſen. The concourſe of people in the Campus Martius for his election was prodigious: many of them, for want of room, climbed up on roofs of the houſes, and gave their ſuffrages by their acclamations. They did juſtice to his great zeal, but did not foreſee the fatal conſequences.

629. Caius Gracchus choſen tribune.

Never did tribune ſhew more activity in the ſervice of the people. To the diviſion of the lands he added ſome new eſtabliſhments, particularly public granaries, from whence the poor might purchaſe their monthly ſubſiſtence at a low rate. Being as much maſter of the people as he was deteſted by the nobles, he cauſed himſelf to be continued tribune, without being intimidated by the fate of his brother.

His zeal for the people.

That the power of the ſenate might be more and more weakened, he made it appear, that very unjuſt deciſions were frequently given from the tribunals, and that the judgment of all diſputes between individuals ought to be transferred to the knights, who belonged to the order of plebeians; and he procured a law to be paſſed for that purpoſe. He likewiſe revived the ſtatute which forbid any Roman citizen to be put to death without the conſent of the ſenate and people. And, laſtly, he undertook to procure the freedom of the city, and right of ſuffrage in the public aſſemblies, to all the allies of Rome in Italy.

His laws to leſſen the power of the ſenate.

The adminiſtration of juſtice transferred to the knights.

This ſcheme, which was too favourable to the popular faction, added greatly to the uneaſineſs of the ſenate; who ſet in motion the ſprings of a very deep policy,

Artful policy of the ſenate, who ſet up Livius to oppoſe Gracchus.

policy, to undermine Gracchus. They gained over Livius Druſus, a young tribune of uncommon abilities and irreproachable character. They ſuggeſted to him how he ought to act, to acquire an influence ſuperiour to that of his colleague; not by direct oppoſition, but by affecting a ſtill greater zeal for promoting the intereſts of the people. Gracchus was charged with the care of a colony which was ſent to rebuild Carthage. The number of his party was greatly leſſened by his abſence, while that of Livius acquired new ſtrength. At his return he found his colleagues were become his opponents, and prevented his being elected a third time to the tribuneſhip. His mortal enemy, Opimius, was choſen conſul, and every thing ſeemed to indicate a bloody termination of the diſpute.

632. Opimius, the conſul, makes the people take up arms.

The people were aſſembled to paſs the new laws with which the nobility were diſguſted, when one of the lictors of Opimius, paſſing near Gracchus's friends, inſolently exclaimed—*Make way there, ye worthleſs people*; upon which he was inſtantly killed. The conſul complained to the ſenate, and was authorized by them to do whatever *he thought moſt expedient for the good of the republic.* This ſet form veſted him with the ſupreme authority, and he ordered the knights to take arms. Notwithſtanding the tears and entreaties of an affectionate wife, Gracchus left his houſe without any guard, though the danger was manifeſt. *After the murder of Tiberius*, ſaid ſhe, *what confidence is to be placed either in the laws or in the gods?* An enemy to all violence, he had blamed the outrage committed upon the perſon of the lictor, a deed which was moſt unjuſtly imputed to him. His enemies, on the contrary, were animated with a deteſtable deſire of revenge, and the effects could not but be dreadful.

Death of Caius. A cruel maſſacre.

Opimius, at the head of the troops, attacked Mount Aventine, to which the people had retired under the direction of Fulvius. He offered pardon to all who would lay down their arms, and engaged to pay for the heads of Fulvius and Gracchus their weight in gold.

Being

Being abandoned by the people, both of them fell; and above three thouſand of their party were killed in this tumult. All their bodies were thrown into the Tiber, by order of this cruel conſul, who had the impudence to erect a temple to Concord, after having deluged the city with blood.

The laws of the Gracchi annulled. Opimius vindicated, and the ſenate triumphant.

That the laws of the Gracchi might be annulled, it was enacted, that the rich ſhould pay a perpetual ſtanding rent, in proportion to the quantity of land they poſſeſſed, and the produce be divided among the poor: but theſe rents were very ſoon ſuppreſſed, and nothing remained to the people but their former wretchedneſs, increaſed by the haughty inſolence of the nobles. Opimius, being accuſed of the maſſacre committed upon ſo many Romans, gained his cauſe before the people by the eloquence of Papirius the conſul. It was even determined, that the conſul, with the authority of the ſenate, might free the republic from any dangerous citizens, without waiting for the opinion of the aſſembly of the people.

If the Gracchi aimed at tyranny.

The two Gracchi certainly were great men. Had they acted with more caution, and leſs warmth, they might have extricated the poor from oppreſſion, or at leaſt have procured them a milder lot; but if they became ſeditious, it was not ſo much their fault as the fault of the rich, who were void of compaſſion for the ſufferings of the people: however, they never deſerved to be reproached with having aimed at tyranny; and the ſenate, by imputing a crime to them which was evidently oppoſite to their principles and conduct, ſought only to deſtroy them, without thinking of the good of the republic. Pretences ſerved them inſtead of juſtice, in theſe dreadful executions, which taught them to be no longer ſparing of Roman blood. The people erected ſtatues to the two illuſtrious victims of the ſenate.

The death of their mother, the illuſtrious Cornelia.

Cornelia had always looked upon her two ſons as her only treaſure; yet ſhe bore their loſs with amazing conſtancy. It was imagined that old age or calamities had deprived her of her feelings: "But they who were

"of

" of that opinion (ſays Plutarch) were ignorant that a " ſuperiour genius, joined to a liberal education, admi- " niſters powerful remedies againſt affliction; and " though fortune may ſometimes oppreſs virtue, yet ſhe " cannot deprive it of that ſerenity and reſolution which " never forſakes it in the day of adverſity." Cornelia lived in retirement, and enjoyed the peaceful ſociety of the learned, where ſhe was honoured, by all men of real merit, as a perfect pattern of virtue and politeneſs, or, in one word, the wonder of Rome. When ſhewing her ſons to a lady who was fond of dreſs, *Theſe are my jewels*, ſaid ſhe. It was the expreſſion of a noble mind, which made her duty her greateſt delight.

Revolt of the ſlaves.

While Rome was diſtracted by theſe diſturbances, the ſlaves in Sicily revolted, and gave the title of king to one of their number, whoſe name was Eunus. Three conſuls carried on the war againſt them, which was ended with the taking of Enna, and followed by a moſt dreadful maſſacre.

Eſtabliſhment in Gaul.

Some time after, the Romans ſettled colonies in *Tranſalpine* Gaul, where they founded Aix in Provence and Narbonne.

The Dalmatians ſubdued.

They conquered the Allobroges and the people of Arvernum *(Auvergnacs)* againſt whom they employed both treachery and open hoſtilities. The Dalmatians were likewiſe reduced.

My plan forbids me to enter into theſe details; it is of greater conſequence to obſerve, that the conſul Scaurus, returning from Gaul, in the year 638, employed his ſoldiers to dig canals in the countries of Placentia and Parma, where the overflowings of the Po, and other rivers, formed impaſſable marſhes. Such ſalutary works are entitled to greater encomiums than the gaining of conqueſts. Let us likewiſe take notice of a ſingular inſtance of integrity highly worthy of imitation.

Noble action of the orator Craſſus.

Papirius Carbo, who had been conſul, and the great enemy of the Gracchi, was proſecuted by the orator Craſſus, who was at that time a very young man. Papirius was betrayed by one of his ſlaves, who ſtole his ſtrong box, which was full of private papers, and put it into the hands of the proſecutor. Craſſus, ſtruck with horrour

horrour at the treachery, did not open the box, from whence he could have had the cleareſt evidence, but ſent it back to Papirius, with the ſlave in chains, ſaying, *I would rather ſee a guilty enemy eſcape, than deſtroy him by any unworthy means.* Papirius was, notwithſtanding, convicted, and went into voluntary baniſhment, where he poiſoned himſelf.

CHAP. II.

The Wickedneſs of Jugurtha.—He corrupts the Senate.—War declared againſt that Prince.

Dreadful corruption in the ſenate.

AT Rome every thing was become venal, and the morals of the chief citizens were tainted by abominable corruption. The immenſe treaſures which had been poured in upon them from all nations, had kindled a paſſion for the poſſeſſion of riches, which extinguiſhed every ſentiment of virtue and honour. We need only to read the account of the Jugurthine war, as given by Salluſt, to ſee the ſenate in the moſt odious light, as a body of men who had ſold themſelves for every purpoſe of iniquity.

Jugurtha accuſed at Rome.

The old king Maſſiniſſa, that faithful ally of Rome, left three ſons, who jointly governed the kingdom of Numidia, till, by the death of the two others, Micipſa remained ſole maſter. Though he had two children, Adherbal and Hiempſal, he adopted Jugurtha, a natural ſon of one of his brothers, who had already diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his valour, and whoſe ambition he hoped to reſtrain by gratitude; but he was ſcarce dead when Jugurtha begun to put his ambitious ſchemes in practice. Hiempſal was his firſt victim; and Adherbal, looking upon that murder as the prelude to his own deſtruction, raiſed an army for his protection; but having loſt a great part of his territories, he went to Rome to ſue for juſtice.

He bribes the ſenators, and is acquitted.

The murderer had been a long time certain, that the moſt enormous crimes might be palliated, in the eyes of the ſenators, by the power of money, and accordingly his liberalities ſpoke favourably for him in the ſenate, where the majority declared in his favour. They contented themſelves with ſending ten commiſſioners into Africa; and Jugurtha, by bribing Opimius, who was at their head, not only was declared innocent, but, in the diviſion of the kingdom, procured whatever could be obtained from the partiality of avaricious judges, whoſe favour he had purchaſed.

He continues his criminal enterpriſes.

Being reſolved to uſurp the remainder, he very ſoon took up arms again, and purſuing Adherbal, who fled for refuge to Cirtha, he inveſted that place. Rome ſeemed to be provoked, and new commiſſioners were ſent. Scaurus, the chief of the ſenate, ſpoke the language of a Roman, threatened the uſurper, and ordered him immediately to raiſe the ſiege; but ſtill deceit and bribery prevailed. The deputies departed, and Adherbal, being deſerted, was obliged to capitulate, and was aſſaſſinated by Jugurtha. That monſter, ſtained with the blood of his brothers, arrogantly enjoyed their ſpoils.

642. Beginning of the Jugurthine war.

It was not poſſible longer to wink at ſuch crying enormities; and the Roman people inſiſted upon taking cognizance of them. The ſenate, ſeeing the neceſſity of giving ſome proof of their juſtice and vigour, reſolved to carry the war into Numidia. Calpurnius Piſo, the conſul, ſet out with Scaurus his lieutenant; they were both avaricious, and conſequently inclined to betray their truſt. Jugurtha made propoſals to them, and, having obtained an interview, procured an advantageous peace, which undoubtedly coſt him a conſiderable ſum.

Being ſummoned to Rome, after he had purchaſed a peace, he obtained impunity by bribery.

Whilſt the ſenate remained in ſilence, Memmius, a tribune of the people, loudly exclaimed againſt the mercenary prevaricators, and determined that Jugurtha ſhould be ſummoned to appear, that they might judge whether his ſubmiſſion was ſincere or pretended. The Numidian, depending upon his treaſures and the contemptible

temptible meanneſs of his numerous partiſans, arrived at Rome, and gained over one of the tribunes. He even cauſed one of his relations, who laid claim to his crown, to be aſſaſſinated, and yet came off unpuniſhed. At leaving Rome he exclaimed, *O venal city! thou wouldeſt ſoon be deſtroyed, if thou couldeſt find any one to purchaſe thee.*

Scaurus, who had been bribed, judged and condemned his accomplices.

To complete the infamy, Scaurus, at the head of a commiſſion appointed to proſecute the traitors who had been corrupted by Jugurtha, baniſhed his own accomplice, Calpurnius, and ſome other ſenators, and even a pontiff, though till this inſtance no pontiff had ever been exiled. The moſt criminal ſometimes affect the greateſt ſeverity, as if they could hope to eſcape the public cenſure by puniſhing others.

Metellus continues the war.

The war having been renewed under the command of Aulus Poſthumius, a cowardly, indiſcreet general, he was obliged by Jugurtha to paſs under the yoke; but Metellus, the conſul, wiped out this ſtain which was thrown upon his country. After having fruitleſſly attempted by ſeduction to get Jugurtha into his poſſeſſion, either dead or alive (for the principles of honour, which ſhould regulate all proceedings, even with reſpect to a perfidious enemy, were totally relaxed) he was ſo ſucceſsful in carrying on the war, that the king was at laſt obliged to ſubmit. Beſides two hundred thouſand pounds weight of ſilver, he was compelled to deliver up all his elephants, and a part of his horſes and arms. After this, being ordered to make his appearance before Metellus, diſtruſt revived his drooping courage. Though he had been already ſtript of his reſources, he reſolved to continue the war, chooſing rather, as he ſaid, to die in the field, than to preſent to the yoke a head ornamented with a diadem.

Jugurtha vanquiſhed, ſtill defends himſelf.

Marius, the lieutenant of the conſul, a dangerous man.

Metellus had choſen for his lieutenant the famous Marius, a plebeian of obſcure birth, without learning or education, but devoured by ambition, who had been hardened to toil from his infancy, ſober, bold, and indefatigable. At the ſiege of Numantia, this warrior had attracted the attention of Scipio Africanus. From be-

ing a private ſoldier, he had been promoted to the command of a cohort, elected tribune of the people, and at laſt pretor, after having twice canvaſſed for the edileſhip without ſucceſs. He was one of thoſe impetuous characters which nothing can divert from their purpoſe; equally capable of doing the greateſt good, or the greateſt miſchief, according as conjunctures are favourable, or intereſt guides.

He cenſures Metellus and the nobility, that he may be choſen conſul.

Marius, aiming at the conſulſhip, and to make himſelf appear to advantage, was not aſhamed to cenſure Metellus, his general and benefactor. He accuſed him of a timid tardineſs, and boaſted, that he could finiſh the war with half the troops in a ſingle campaign. He procured leave to go to Rome to canvaſs for the higheſt office of the republic; and when there, redoubled his invectives, both againſt the illuſtrious Metellus, and the whole body of the nobility. In a word, he ſo gained the people, that he was choſen conſul, and appointed to proſecute the Jugurthine war, though the ſenate had aſſigned that province to Metellus, for the third time, in quality of proconſul. Thus did ambition triumph.

He is appointed to the command.

He inveighs againſt the nobles.

Marius being become more bold than ever in his ſpeeches to the people, before his departure gave free vent to his gall againſt the nobility, treating them with the utmoſt contempt, and extolling himſelf with inſolent haughtineſs. The ſpeech put into his mouth by Salluſt is a picture of his character and ſentiments. There may be eaſily traced the firm uncultivated ſentiments of a ſoldier who places all merit in military accompliſhments. However, his extravagant declamations contain very uſeful maxims, well calculated to make every man, who is proud of his birth, bluſh at having diſgraced it by unworthy actions.

Metellus recalled, but honoured at Rome.

Such cenſure could never be applied to Metellus. He was prudent, and he was a conqueror. He hoped to bring the war to a ſpeedy concluſion, when he had the mortification to ſee the command ſnatched out of his hands by an ungrateful wretch whom he himſelf had raiſed. At his return to Rome, he found no difficulty in

in diſpelling any unjuſt ſuſpicions that might have been conceived againſt him; and a triumph was decreed to him by the people, with the ſurname of Numidicus. Having been accuſed by one of the tribunes of pillaging the province, the Roman knights refuſed to examine his accompts, which he produced for his vindication. *The ſtrongeſt proof of his innocence*, ſaid they, *is the teſtimony of his whole life.* Was not an accuſation ſo concluded equal to a triumph?

647. Jugurtha delivered up to the Romans by infamous treachery.

Notwithſtanding the military ſkill and courage of Marius, the Jugurthine war was not finiſhed but by treachery. Sylla, his queſtor, who very ſoon became his rival, ſeduced Bocchus, king of Mauritania, and ſon in law of Jugurtha,* from his alliance with the king, and then perſuaded him to deliver up that prince in the moſt infamous manner to the Romans. After having wavered for ſome time between the calls of nature and the temptations of intereſt, Bocchus arreſted his father in law, who, on the ſecurity of the word of honour of his ſon, came to hold a conference, at which he was made to expect that Sylla ſhould be put in his power. The king of Numidia was led to Rome, loaded with chains, to grace the triumph of Marius, where he endured the humiliating inſults of the ſoldiery, and periſhed in a dungeon, the victim of his own wickedneſs, and of the revenge of a corrupted republic, become contemtible even in the boſom of victory.

Rome enriched likewiſe by this war.

The plunder of his kingdom amounted to three thouſand ſeven hundred pounds weight of gold, and near ſix thouſand pounds of ſilver, beſides coined money. War, which has been ſo ruinous to modern nations, always enriched the Romans. Should we then be ſurpriſed, when we ſee that their ambition commonly concluded one war only to begin another? But we are now approaching to the period in which the ſpoils of the world were only to ſerve as food for civil war, when the deſire of tearing it from one another made the people become the

* M. Millot muſt here be miſtaken, Bocchus being the father in law of Jugurtha.

the greateſt enemies of the republic, and when Rome at laſt was to be puniſhed by the wickedneſs of her own children for the many acts of injuſtice ſhe did to mankind.

CHAP. III.

Invaſion of the Cimbri and Teutones.—Dreadful Corruption of the Republic.—The Social War.

Invaſion of the Cimbri and Teutones.

THESE inſatiable conquerors were very ſoon in danger of loſing the fruit of all their victories, by a dreadful deluge of barbarians. The Cimbri and Teutones, iſſuing from the north of Europe and the neighbourhood of the Baltic, entered the country of the Norici, at preſent Bavaria and Tirol, and afterwards into Gaul, where they were joined by ſome of the people of the Gauliſh diſtricts. They defeated five conſuls, with a dreadful ſlaughter. In the year 648, Rome loſt fourſcore thouſand men in a ſingle engagement.

Marius choſen conſul ſeveral years ſucceſſively, on purpoſe to fight againſt them.

Marius alone ſeemed to be capable of recovering theſe loſſes. The laws did not allow an abſent perſon to be choſen conſul, and made it neceſſary that ten years ſhould elapſe before any one could be re-elected; however, they waved the common form; Marius was appointed conſul for the ſecond time, before he returned from Africa, and choſen for four years ſucceſſively, till the barbarians were totally defeated. A very dangerous precedent in a republican government.

His capacity & prudence in this war.

His capacity and courage were equally diſplayed in Gaul, where the war firſt begun. His army was ſubjected to the moſt rigid diſcipline. His nephew, a legionary tribune, of a very debauched character, having been killed by a ſoldier, whom he had inſulted, the homicide, ſo far from being puniſhed, was rewarded. Marius, who was politician enough to profit by the ſuperſtition of his country, with great parade led about a pretended propheteſs, to whom he dictated oracles, and who ſeemed to impreſs the ſtamp of divinity upon all his projects.

projects. Having been challenged to ſingle combat by one of the chiefs of the enemy—*If he is deſirous to die*, ſaid the conſul coldly, *let him hang himſelf.*

651. He defeated the Teutones, and afterwards the Cimbri.

The Teutones, though ſeparated from the Cimbri, were formidable by their number and bravery. Deſpiſing their inſults, and accuſtoming his troops not to be diſmayed at their appearance or their cries, Marius did not chooſe to hazard an engagement till he thought he was ſecure of a victory: but he at laſt cut them entirely to pieces at Aix in Provence, where, it is ſaid, they loſt above an hundred thouſand men. The following year, being the fifth of his conſulſhip, he likewiſe defeated the Cimbri at Vercellæ, while they were laying waſte the country of Italy. Plutarch tells us, that the greateſt part of theſe barbarians, both men and women, hanged themſelves in deſpair, rather than ſurvive their defeat; and, when they could find no more trees, they tied themſelves by the neck to the tails of their horſes, or the horns of their bullocks. Perhaps they would have ſubdued the Romans if they had been as well diſciplined; but they knew only how to fight like madmen, and die with courage. Catulus, the proconſul, who, with Sylla, commanded a part of the army, had a greater ſhare in gaining the victory than Marius, and partook with him in the honour of the triumph. Nevertheleſs, Catulus is almoſt entirely forgotten, ſo much does reputation ſometimes depend upon the caprice of fortune.

Marius ſacrifices every thing to the love of power.

Marius, in ſaving the republic, ſought only to gratify his ambition. Having an inſatiable deſire for honours, and ſacrificing every thing to his love of power, by bribery and cringing, he procured the conſulſhip for the ſixth time; and though the great Metellus was upon the liſt, he found means to cauſe a man of no merit to be appointed his colleague.

He unites himſelf with Saturninus.

He formed the ſtricteſt union with Saturninus, a tribune of the people, and Glaucia, the pretor, two men who were equally enemies to virtue and the public weal.

Saturninus

Law of that tribune againſt the ſenate.

Saturninus propoſed an Agrarian law with the following clauſe—"That the ſenate ſhould oblige themſelves, "by oath, to confirm whatever was enacted by the peo- "ple, with this penalty, that every ſenator who refuſed "to take it ſhould be degraded, and pay a fine of "twenty talents." The crafty conſul, who at firſt affected oppoſition, afterwards declared in favour of it with an equivocal reſtriction, which drew the ſenators into the ſnare. Metellus, whom he wanted to deſtroy, perſiſting ſingly to refuſe it, was baniſhed. *Either things muſt change*, ſaid he, on leaving Rome, *and the people, ſeeing their errour, will recall me; or they will not change, and then I muſt congratulate myſelf on being abſent from my country.* They did change, and even from the violence of Saturninus, who puſhed matters to ſuch extremity, that he was forſaken by Marius.

Metellus baniſhed.

653. Saturninus puniſhed for his violence. Metellus recalled.

That tribune, being anxious to have Glaucia choſen conſul, cauſed his competitor Memmius to be publicly aſſaſſinated; upon which the ſenate, as was the cuſtom in caſes of great danger, ordered the conſuls to provide for the ſafety of the republic. They armed againſt the rioters, and purſued Saturninus into the capitol, where he and Glaucia were both maſſacred notwithſtanding the deſire which Marius had to ſave them. Marius very ſoon had the mortification to ſee Metellus recalled, who in the boſom of virtue and philoſophy conſoled himſelf for the oppreſſions he had ſuffered; and whoſe baniſhment, according to a Roman hiſtorian (Velleius Paterculus) did him more honour than all his dignities and all his triumphs. Before his arrival, Marius, upon ſome vain pretence, went into Aſia, that he might not witneſs the glory of a rival who had been oppreſſed by his ambition.

Univerſal degeneracy of the republic.

The republic, having attained the higheſt point of greatneſs, tottered on the brink of the precipice. That generous patriotiſm, which made individuals ſacrifice their own intereſt to the good of the ſtate, was almoſt totally forgotten. The citizens of the greateſt merit became the victims of the worthleſs. Rutilius, being baſe-

ly

ly accuſed, becauſe of his having reproved the public receivers for being guilty of extortion, went into voluntary exile, rather than ſtoop to offer a defence. Upon one of his acquaintance ſaying to him, that a civil war would very ſoon make it an eaſy matter to have him recalled, he replied—*What harm have I done to you, that you ſhould wiſh me ſuch an unhappy reſtoration? May my country rather bluſh at my being in baniſhment, than afflicted at my return!*

Oppreſſions of the receivers.

To enrich themſelves, the tax gatherers may be ſaid to have waſted the provinces. Being knights, and the courts of juſtice in the poſſeſſion of their order, they were not apprehenſive of inquiries being made into their conduct, or the ſeverity of juſtice. Beſides, did not the produce of their rapacious plunderings procure them importance with their riches, and in ſome degree a title to impunity?

Enormous luxury of the great.

The greateſt officers in the ſtate gave in to a parade of opulence and the caprices of luxury, which give room to ſuppoſe, or always bring after them, a depravation of manners.

Whim of Craſſus the orator.

Craſſus the orator, though he was cenſor, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a magnificence, which would have been puniſhed in former times as a ſhameful irregularity. According to Macrobius, he was ſo fond of a tame lamprey, that after the death of the fiſh he wore mourning, and had a monument erected to its memory. A ſenator, who was tribune of the people (for the patricians came to be deſirous of that office) cauſed the law to be annulled which limited the expenſes of the table, repreſenting it as *the ruſt of harſh, uncivilized antiquity*. In a word, the paſſions were daily inflamed by new vices, and one ſpark was ſufficient to kindle a civil war, to which that of the allies ſerved as a prelude.

662. Laws of Druſus, which occaſion the Social war.

The Italian ſtates, allies of Rome, had for a long time hoped to be admitted to the privileges of Roman citizens. Caius Gracchus, to ſtrengthen his party, had endeavoured to procure this important advantage to the Latins, and loſt his life in the attempt. Druſus, the tribune,

tribune, a man of eminent abilities, and diſtinguiſhed by his birth, formed a chimerical ſcheme to gratify the allies, and all the different orders of the ſtate. Seeking to redreſs great evils, he occaſioned ſtill greater, which is a common conſequence when vice prevails. He propoſed Agrarian laws, the ſettling of new colonies, and the diſtribution of corn for the relief of the poor: he likewiſe propoſed that the adminiſtration of juſtice ſhould be ſhared between the ſenators and the knights, as the knights had publicly abuſed that power; and that any magiſtrate who ſhould prevaricate in the execution of that office ſhould be brought to a trial. It was ſaid, though upon what authority is not known, that he intended to indemnify the knights, by cauſing three hundred of them to be admitted into the ſenate. As the allies had very conſiderable influence by means of their friends and relations, Druſus won them over to his intereſt, by promiſing them the privileges of citizens. So well did he know how to manage the tempers of the people, that notwithſtanding the warmeſt oppoſition his laws were paſſed.

He deprives the knights of ſome part of their judicial authority.

Beſides the inconvenience ariſing from the number of citizens being multiplied without end, there was one great obſtacle to the pretenſions of the allies. The Romans could not conſent to make theſe people their equals, whom they had always looked upon as their ſubjects; and in this reſpect, Druſus felt the weakneſs of his influence. The allies, having loſt all hope of ſeeing his promiſe made good, ſome of them entered into a reſolution to aſſaſſinate the conſuls. The tribune, being informed of the conſpiracy, had the generoſity to acquaint Philippus the conſul, who was his greateſt enemy. As a reward of his ſervice, he was himſelf aſſaſſinated very ſoon after. An anecdote has been related of him, which will ſerve to give us an idea of his virtue. The architect offering to conſtruct a new houſe which he was building in ſuch a manner as to prevent his being overlooked—*Rather employ your art*, ſaid he, *that my actions may be expoſed to the view of the whole world.*

He could not obtain the rights of the city for the allies.

Notwithſtanding the worth of Druſus, he was aſſaſſinated.

How

How do ſuch worthy citizens make vice hang down her head, even in days of univerſal corruption!

The death of Druſus ſerved as a ſignal for the war of the allies, who had concerted to revolt. They took up arms, and were the more formidable as they were accuſtomed to the military knowledge and diſcipline of the Romans; and without them Rome had never conquered. The Samnites and Marſi were at their head. They formed a plan of a new republic upon the model of that whoſe yoke they wanted to ſhake off, and appointed conſuls, pretors, and other magiſtrates, for themſelves. They fought againſt the beſt Roman generals, Marius, Sylla and Pompey, and after the firſt campaign ſent to Rome to demand juſtice, and to claim a ſhare of thoſe advantages which they had contributed to procure. The ſenate replied, with their uſual ſteadineſs, that their demands might be attended to, if they laid down their arms and acknowledged their fault; but if they did not comply, let them take care how they ſent any more ambaſſadours. From that time they fought with ſtill greater inveteracy, and with various ſucceſs, till Roman policy found it neceſſary to employ artifice as well as reſolution. After having enrolled her freedmen, contrary to cuſtom, Rome artfully granted the privileges of the city to thoſe of the allies who had continued in their duty, and alſo to ſuch of the reſt as made proper ſubmiſſion, ſo that the Social war relaxed all at once, each people withdrawing from the league, in order to obtain the object of their pretenſions by a ſeparate treaty. The Samnites and the Lucanians alone obſtinately perſiſted in the war.

Revolt of the allies. The Social war.

Roman policy diſarms part of the allies by making them citizens.

The ſenate very ſoon diſcovered a means of rendering that which had been obtained with ſo much difficulty, of very little uſe to the allies. Inſtead of diſtributing them among the thirty five tribes, where, from their number, they would have had a majority of votes, they compoſed eight new tribes, who, as they were to give their voices laſt, could have no ſort of influence: however, they conſented to this, either from not ſeeing what would

664. Eight new tribes formed of the allies inſtead of diſtributing them among the old.

would be the conſequence of ſuch an arrangement, or that they were ſufficiently gratified by being admitted as citizens.

The knights deprived of the adminiſtration of juſtice.

After the death of Druſus all his laws were annulled; but Plautius the tribune ſucceeded better in ſtripping the knights of their juriſdiction. He cauſed a law to be paſſed to make each tribe name fifteen of their number to try civil cauſes; but the audaciouſneſs of the wicked could no longer be reſtrained. Aſellio, the pretor, who protected the poor againſt the uſury and inſults of their creditors, was aſſaſſinated at the very time he was offering up a ſacrifice, without the ſenate being able to diſcover the authors of ſuch an atrocious and glaring crime.

A dreadful crime unpuniſhed.

Human victims forbidden.

The practice of ſacrificing human victims had taken place on particular occaſions, but they had been lately forbidden. It was an homage paid to humanity: but we ſhall ſoon ſee both citizens and the republic ſacrificed to gratify frantic paſſions.

NINTH

NINTH EPOCHA.

The Civil Wars.—Ruin of the Republic.

From the Year of Rome 665 to 724.

CHAP. I.

Marius and Sylla begin the Civil War.

THE Social war being ended, it was but making one ſtep farther to involve the republic in all the horrours of a civil war. It was no longer new to ſee that blood flowing which nature and the laws ſhould have rendered precious; and the violence of the different factions had made acts of oppreſſion perfectly familiar. When an ambitious man is deſirous of carrying his point by force of arms, it is an eaſy matter to find miniſters for his outrageous purpoſes; of which Marius and Sylla ſet a dreadful example. We have already made the reader ſufficiently acquainted with Marius, but the other deſerves to be better known.

The Social war led to the civil wars.

He was of the illuſtrious family of the Cornelii, and deſcended from Cornelius Rufinus, who had been expelled the ſenate, by the cenſors, in the year of Rome 477, becauſe he had ſilver plate in his poſſeſſion to the amount of more than a hundred and five ounces, and from that time not one of that branch of the family had attained the rank of conſul. Sylla, being poſſeſſed of the happieſt genius, improved by learning and politeneſs, excited by ambition, and a love of glory, with courage, activity, and exceſſive pliancy of diſpoſition, was perfectly qualified for raiſing the honour of his family. Though fond of pleaſures, he knew how to ſacrifice them to his fortune and reputation; and though born to very little, he amaſſed great riches, which undoubtedly

Sylla diſtinguiſhed for his abilities and noble birth.

doubtedly made him deſerve the cenſure once thrown out againſt him—*How is it poſſible that you can be an honeſt man, who are at preſent ſo rich, though your father did not leave you any thing?* After the Jugurthine war, he obtained the office of pretor by means of his money and intrigues. Perhaps he owed a conſiderable part of his popularity to his entertaining the people with a combat of a hundred lions againſt men; a moſt dreadful ſpectacle! but perfectly agreeable to the taſte of the Romans; and this, together with his diſtinguiſhed actions during the Social war, wherein he outſhone Marius, greatly increaſed their attachment to his perſon. He was choſen conſul, and was ſent to carry on the war againſt Mithridates, king of Pontus, whom I ſhall ſoon have occaſion to mention.

He riſes to the firſt offices of the ſtate.

665. By means of Sulpicius, the tribune, Marius wreſts from him the command of the war againſt Mithridates.

Marius could never forgive Sylla for having aſcribed the ſucceſs of the expedition againſt Numidia to himſelf; and, though old, unwieldy, and infirm, wanted to have the command in this new war. To carry it from his rival, he joined with Sulpicius, tribune of the people, an inſolent unruly man, always eſcorted by ſatellites, whom he imprudently called his *anti-ſenate*. After a tumult, in which the lives of both conſuls were in danger, a law was paſſed by the tribune, importing that the allies, who were newly admitted into the freedom of the city, ſhould be incorporated with the ancient tribes, inſtead of forming eight new tribes, as had been determined by the late conventions. By this means, having ſecured a majority of votes, he propoſed to appoint Marius, who was then out of office, to be general of the army againſt Mithridates, and eaſily carried his point.

Sylla enters Rome ſword in hand.

The changes which he made.

Sylla was at his camp when he received information of this affront; and, reſolving to be revenged, led his army, upon which he knew he could depend, towards Rome, where a number of his party had been already maſſacred. He entered ſword in hand, and threatened to ſet fire to the city if he met with the leaſt oppoſition. Marius and Sulpicius being fled, he reſtrained the ſoldiers, and prevented them from committing any outrage.

rage. He annulled the laws of Sulpicius, and re-eſtabliſhed the authority of the ſenate by reſtoring the ancient rule which forbid any law to be propoſed until it had their ſanction: he enacted, that the people ſhould from thenceforth give their votes by centuries, and not by tribes; and they, being intimidated, confirmed all theſe changes. The republic was in ſuch a wavering ſtate, that whoever was ſtrongeſt dictated whatever laws he pleaſed. When principles are annihilated, force muſt govern.

Decree of proſcription.

The conſul, to gratify his revenge, propoſed to the ſenate to have Marius and his ſon, Sulpicius and nine of their adherents, declared enemies of their country. This was oppoſed with great ſpirit by Q. Scævola, a learned and truly worthy citizen. *Neither your threatenings, nor your ſoldiers*, ſaid he, *ſhall make me diſgrace my old age, by declaring that man the enemy of Rome, who has preſerved both Rome and Italy.* But the other ſenators were more pliant, and paſſed a decree of proſcription. The head of Sulpicius, being brought to Rome, became an object of terrour. Marius was taken in the marſhes of Minturnæ, where he had concealed himſelf. A ſoldier, who was to have been his executioner, awed by the ſight of that great general, durſt not ſtrike the blow; and the people of Minturnæ aſſiſted him to make his eſcape into Africa. The governour of that province having ſent him orders to depart, Marius boldly replied to the officer who delivered the meſſage—*Go and tell him, that thou haſt ſeen Marius, a fugitive, amidſt the ruins of Carthage.* A ſtriking picture of the viciſſitudes of fortune! He then retired with his ſon to an iſland, in expectation of ſome favourable revolution.

Marius on the ruins of Carthage.

666. Cinna choſen conſul, declares againſt Sylla, and is expelled.

Every thing very ſoon changed its appearance in Rome. Cinna, a violent partiſan of Marius, was choſen conſul; to which Sylla agreed, after having made him ſwear that he would not oppoſe his intereſt. He even affected to rejoice at ſeeing the people make uſe of that liberty to which he pretended he had reſtored them. But this moderation was not ſufficient to diſarm his opponents

ponents of the hatred they had conceived againſt him. The new conſul, though his relation, cauſed him immediately to be accuſed by a tribune, and by this means obliged him to ſet out for the army that was engaged in carrying on the war againſt Mithridates; for all proſecutions againſt a citizen immediately ceaſed when he was employed in the ſervice of the republic; and, upon his departure, Cinna acted without any reſerve. He reſtored the law made by Sulpicius regarding the privileges of the allies; but being oppoſed by his colleague Octavius, they came to blows, and the forum ſwum in blood. The enemy of Sylla was driven out of Rome, deprived of the conſulſhip, and Merula, prieſt of Jupiter, choſen his ſucceſſor.

Marius & Cinna beſiege Rome, & maſſacre their enemies.

Marius, finding this a favourable opportunity, returned and joined Cinna, who declared him proconſul, when both, at the head of a conſiderable army, laid ſiege to the city. Their preſumption was greatly increaſed by the ſenate ſubmitting to ſend them deputies. Cinna refuſed to hearken to them till he was acknowledged to be the rightful conſul, and promiſed, upon his being recognized after the voluntary demiſſion of Merula, that he would ſpare the lives of the people; but, nevertheleſs, Marius and he, with the other leaders, entered into a reſolution to put all thoſe to death whom they looked upon as enemies, and accordingly that dreadful maſſacre was perpetrated.

General idea of the miſeries of Rome.

Let us figure to ourſelves a city ſtormed by ſavages; the heads of the moſt illuſtrious citizens expoſed to public view upon the roſtra; the poſſeſſion of wealth and power a ſufficient cauſe for being proſcribed; a thirſt of blood increaſed even by carnage; the furious Marius, who had affected to feel the depreſſion of a man under misfortunes, though above ſeventy years of age, ſurpaſſing Cinna in acts of cruelty; and we ſhall have formed an idea of the dreadful ſpectacle which was then exhibited in Rome.

One brother kills another.

I ſhall mention a ſingle anecdote, which may ſerve to mark the character of civil wars. Two brothers happened

pened to encounter in an engagement, wherein the one killed the other without knowing him, and while ſtripping him of his armour diſcovered who he was, when in a tranſport of deſpair he immediately killed himſelf upon the funeral pile of his brother, that their aſhes by that means might be mingled.

Death of Marius during his ſeventh conſulſhip.

At the cloſe of this year of barbarity, Marius and Cinna ſeized upon the conſulſhip, without condeſcending to wait the form of election. The firſt of them died very ſoon after. Being greatly diſturbed by the apprehenſions which were the natural conſequence of his guilt, he dreaded the return of the victorious Sylla, whoſe vengeance he concluded muſt be terrible. Having no reſources from the exerciſe of reaſon, he endeavoured by immoderate drinking to lull his ſenſes aſleep, and thus met the death he deſerved. If that monſter of cruelty and wickedneſs ſaved Rome, it was only to deſtroy it on a future occaſion. Learning, which he ſo much affected to deſpiſe, would at leaſt have informed him, that he only tormented himſelf in a vain purſuit of happineſs; that being elected ſeven times to the conſulſhp was an ineffectual remedy for the diſtractions of a mind immerſed in guilt; and that iniquitous power, employed in exerciſes of cruelty, muſt prove an equal ſcourge to the oppreſſor and the oppreſſed. His example will never be quoted by the enemies of learning; no better evidence need be adduced to refute their invectives.

He was made unhappy by his ambition.

Barbarity of Fimbria to Scævola the pontiff.

Valerius Maximus tells us, that the day on which Marius was buried, Fimbria, one of his moſt violent partiſans, cauſed the celebrated pontiff Scævola to be aſſaſſinated, and as the wound did not prove mortal, ſummoned him to be tried. Some perſon aſking Fimbria, *Of what he propoſed to accuſe this valuable man? Of not having received the wound of the dagger deep enough in his body*, ſaid he, *by which he ought to have been killed.* This ſtory ſeems abſurd, but ſuch men were much worſe than wild beaſts.

CHAP. II.

The Expeditions of Sylla into Greece and Aſia.—Mithridates a formidable Enemy to Rome.

Mithridates a formidable enemy to Rome.

IT is now time to follow Sylla in his expeditions, and to be made acquainted with the famous enemy againſt whom he was employed. We have already ſeen the Roman republic eſtabliſh her deſpotic ſway in Aſia, commanding kings, protecting ſome to ſubdue others, and ſetting herſelf up as an univerſal umpire, that ſhe might decide in ſuch a manner as was beſt calculated to ſerve her own purpoſes. When Mithridates, king of Pontus, came to be of age ſufficient to engage in military enterpriſes, he was reſolved to oppoſe this ambitious power. His illuſtrious birth, the elevation of his ſentiments, the great powers of his genius, his courage confirmed by being enured to fatigue, his advantageous ſituation, his harbours upon the Euxine ſea, all together contributed to make him capable of ſucceeding in the moſt difficult undertakings; and his ambition was boundleſs.

His conqueſts in Aſia and in Greece.

This prince had wreſted Cappadocia from Ariobarzanes, and Bithynia from Nicomedes, both of them kings in alliance with Rome, and conquered all Aſia Minor. Rome having declared war againſt him, he cauſed fourſcore thouſand Romans or Italians to be maſſacred in one day, as if he had been reſolved to kindle an irreconcilable hatred between the two nations. Such a dreadful carnage, which was extended with the ſame rage through all the provinces, proves how much the Roman yoke was deteſted in Aſia.

Maſſacre of the Romans.

The Athenians give themſelves up to him.

The generals of Mithridates at laſt took poſſeſſion of Greece; and the Athenians were fooliſhly elated at this change of maſters. Ariſtion, an ambitious ſophiſt, who inſpired them with this enthuſiaſm in favour of Mithridates, governed Athens like a tyrant; the worthy leader of a ſlaviſh people, whoſe ancient glory was reduced to diſputes about words.

667. Sylla takes poſſeſſion of Athens, and ſpares it on account of the great men which that city had produced.

Mithridates having taken advantage of the troubles which prevailed in Rome, Sylla, as we formerly obſerved, at laſt ſet out to ſtop his career; and, paſſing into Greece, reſolved to ſeize Athens and the Piræus at the ſame time. The money with which he had been ſupplied being inſufficient (for he laviſhed it upon his ſoldiers to attach them to his intereſt) he ſeized upon the treaſures of the temples, not even ſparing that of Delphos. On receiving them, he ſaid, ſmiling, *that his victory certainly could not be doubted, ſince his troops were paid by the gods.* Though ſurrounded with dangers, the Athenians could not help retorting the raillery. A dreadful famine compelled them to ſue for pardon; and their deputies, or rather the deputies of Ariſtion, were ſent to harangue Sylla. They ſpoke loudly of Theſeus and of Codrus, of the battles of Marathon and Salamis.—*Go and repeat theſe fine diſcourſes in your ſchools, ye vain conceited mortals*, ſaid he; *I did not come here to learn your hiſtory, but to puniſh rebels.* The city was taken by ſtorm, and given up to be plundered; but the conqueror, when he was going to give orders to raze it to ground, relented, *and pardoned the living for the ſake of the dead*; ſuch reſpect did the glory of the ancient heroes of Athens and the great geniuſes which ſhe had formerly produced ſtill command, notwithſtanding the abject ſtate to which that famous republic had ſunk. The Piræus was burnt to the ground, after Archelaus, one of the beſt generals of Mithridates, had been obliged to abandon it.

He gains two great victories.

All the hopes of the enemy were blaſted by Sylla's gaining two complete victories, the one at Cheronea and the other at Orchomenos. He acquired the more honour at the ſecond battle, as it was on the point of being loſt; ſeeing his troops flying, he haſtened to that quarter, diſmounted from his horſe, and ſeizing a ſtandard, expoſed himſelf to the enemy, at the ſame time crying out to his flying army—*It ſhall be my glory that I periſhed here; but for you, if you are aſked where you abandoned*

doned your general, you may anſwer, at Orchomenos. This was ſufficient to make the Romans invincible.

He rejected the offers made him by the general of Mithridates with diſdain.

At this very time when Sylla was ſo employed in ſupporting the Roman cauſe, he was proſcribed as an enemy of the republic. Cinna, who was choſen conſul for the third time, in conjunction with Carbo, his colleague, exerciſed the moſt inſufferable tyranny. Archelaus, thinking that Sylla would be glad in ſuch a ſituation to bring the war to a ſpeedy concluſion, made him an offer of every kind of aſſiſtance if he choſe to return into Italy. The Roman general, incenſed at the propoſal, offered him in his turn to place him on the throne of Mithridates, if he would deliver up the fleet which was under his command. Archelaus replied, he abhorred treaſon. *What*, ſaid Sylla, *ſhall you, a Cappadocian, the ſlave or friend of a king of barbarians, bluſh to purchaſe a crown at ſuch a price, yet dare to talk of treachery to a Roman general—to Sylla?* He concluded by preſcribing the terms upon which a peace would be granted to Mithridates; that he ſhould yield up all his conqueſts, and confine himſelf within his ancient territories; that he ſhould return all his priſoners and the fugitive ſlaves; pay two thouſand talents to the Romans, and likewiſe deliver to them ſeventy of his ſhips of war: to which terms Archelaus agreed without waiting for inſtructions from Mithridates.

A fine ſaying by Sylla.

Flaccus ſent againſt Sylla, and killed by Fimbria.

In the mean time, Valerius Flaccus, who had been appointed general by Cinna, came by order of the ſenate to deprive Sylla of the command; an order not eaſy to be executed. All his army, except two legions, forſook him, and joined the troops under Sylla. Flaccus, finding that he could do nothing againſt him, marched away for Byzantium to attack Mithridates, but was killed by his own lieutenant, the violent Fimbria, whom he had degraded, and who had not the leaſt regard for duties of any kind. Fimbria immediately aſſumed the command, and began the war in Aſia with conſiderable ſucceſs. He encouraged his army by indulging them in licentiouſneſs and the liberty of plundering wherever they went,

went, without foreſeeing that troops once corrupted will not long continue in ſubordination.

Fimbria falls after Sylla had concluded a peace with Mithridates.

Mithridates requeſted an interview with Sylla, to whom he ſubmitted upon the terms already propoſed; and immediately after the concluſion of the treaty, Sylla marched againſt Fimbria, who was his perſonal enemy. He cauſed him to be ſummoned to come and give up the command of the army; but Fimbria refuſed, and being forſaken by all his ſoldiers, after having endeavoured in vain to make the general be aſſaſſinated, he fell upon his own ſword. He had all the abilities and all the cruelty of Marius.

Sylla enriches his army, by which they are corrupted.

The fortunate Sylla, having thus overcome every obſtruction, was unwilling to leave Aſia till he had revenged the maſſacre of ſo many Romans. Plutarch ſays, that the contributions which were levied from the rebellious cities amounted to twenty thouſand talents. His legions were cantoned over the whole country, where the inhabitants were obliged to pay each ſoldier ſixteen drachmæ every day, beſides lodging and furniſhing them with proviſion. Such a pernicious example foreboded the decay of diſcipline. *Then*, ſays Salluſt, *was the firſt time that a Roman army was ſeen to have a paſſion for wine and women, a taſte for ſtatues, pictures, and carved vaſes; to rob individuals, cities, and temples; and, in a word, to pillage every thing both ſacred and profane.* Every day this rapacious diſpoſition increaſed more and more. As much as Sylla deſerves to be cenſured for allowing diſcipline to be enervated, ſo much does he deſerve to be admired, ſays Paterculus, for having ſuſpended his reſentment, and left his own intereſt neglected, until he had finiſhed the war againſt Mithridates. *He thought it his duty to cruſh the enemy, before he revenged the injuries done to him by his fellow citizens.* But all his glory was very ſoon tarniſhed by the cruelty of that revenge; and the adverſary of Marius was, for a time, a faithful imitator of his inhumanity.

Diſorders in Rome.

An univerſal diſorder in the public finances, as well as in private fortunes, which was effected by the diſtruſt

and

and the perpetual alarms to which the Romans had been for ſome time expoſed; but above all, by the loſs of Aſia, where the republic had an infinite number of ſettlements; the ruin of public credit by this violent ſhock, and the change that was made in the value of money, which occaſioned every commercial tranſaction to be diſtruſted, all concurred to increaſe the diſtractions in Rome after the death of Marius. Cinna and Carbo, who were ſtill conſuls, had raiſed troops to oppoſe Sylla. The firſt of them fell in a military ſedition, and the other demanded hoſtages from all the towns in Italy; but Caſtricius, the chief magiſtrate of Placentia, refuſing to comply, *I have a number of ſwords*, ſaid Carbo; *and I*, replied the magiſtrate boldly, *a number of years*. A ſimilar anſwer was ſaid to have been given by Solon to Piſiſtratus; it expreſſes the noble ſentiments of an old man, who looks upon life as nothing in compariſon of virtue.

A magiſtrate of Placentia oppoſes Carbo the conſul.

CHAP. III.

Return of Sylla.—His Proſcriptions.—His Dictatorſhip, and his Death.

670. Return of Sylla. His cauſe was eſpouſed in Rome.

WHEN Sylla arrived with his army, which conſiſted only of about forty thouſand men, he found above two hundred thouſand in arms to oppoſe him; but he was beloved by his ſoldiers, and had the art to ſeduce the reſt to join his party. Carbo, ſpeaking of him, ſaid, *He is a lion and a fox. I dread the fox more than the lion.* A whole conſular army, with Cethegus, Verres, and Pompey, who, though very young, had made himſelf already eminent by his merit, together with many others of high rank, joined his ſtandard. He animated the people, and inſpired them with confidence. Craſſus having demanded an eſcort when going to levy troops, becauſe he was to croſs a country in poſſeſſion of the enemy—*I give you for an eſcort*, ſaid Sylla, *your father, your brother, and your kindred, who have been inhumanly*

humanly butchered, and whoſe murder I ſeek to revenge. At theſe words Craſſus inſtantly ſet out and executed his commiſſion ſucceſsfully.

He gains ſeveral great victories.

The conſul Norbanus was defeated in an action where he loſt ſeven thouſand men. The young Marius being conſul next year, after having, like his father, maſſacred a great many of the ſenate, in his turn engaged Sylla, and ſaw his army cut to pieces. According to Sylla's memoirs, quoted by Plutarch, he loſt only twenty three men, though he killed twenty thouſand of the enemy, and took eight thouſand priſoners. How is it poſſible to credit this, if we believe what is ſaid afterwards, that both armies fought for a conſiderable time with doubtful ſucceſs?

Teleſinus defeated.

A laſt victory, which was gained over the Samnites and the Lucanians at the gates of Rome, was ſtill more glorious for Sylla. Theſe unconquerable enemies of the Roman name obſtinately perſiſted in carrying on the *Social* war, under the command of Teleſinus, who was a brave and able general; and were not defeated till after they had been victorious. Teleſinus was killed in the field of battle.

Treacherous cruelty to the conquered.

Sylla cauſed ſix thouſand men to be cruelly maſſacred, who had laid down their arms, and to whom he had promiſed their lives. The rage of civil war had poiſoned a character which ſeemed to have been more inclined to acts of beneficence and moderation than violence.

All his enemies proſcribed.

In all the hiſtories of human barbarity, there are few inſtances of enormous cruelty to be compared with the proſcriptions of Sylla. Some perſon ſaid to him—*We do not aſk mercy for thoſe whom you are reſolved to put to death, but that you would relieve from apprehenſion thoſe whom you mean to ſave. I do not as yet know whom I mean to ſave*, anſwered he.—*Then name thoſe whom you are reſolved to deſtroy*, replied the other. The next day was publiſhed a liſt of fourſcore who were proſcribed, of whom Marius and Carbo, the two conſuls, were the firſt; the day following, another liſt of two hundred and twenty; and a like number again on the third

day. At laſt the tyrant declared that he would not pardon any of his enemies.

Cruelty carried to the greateſt extremity.

To afford any of them an aſylum, though connected by the ties of blood, was a capital offence. The ſlave was invited by rewards to murder his maſter, and even the ſon to kill his father; the ſum of two talents being paid for the head of every perſon proſcribed. Property was confiſcated, and even unborn generations were puniſhed; for the grand children of thoſe unfortunate people were declared infamous, and incapable of holding any office. Rome and the provinces were made ſcenes of dreadful butchery, for great numbers were ſacrificed only becauſe of their wealth. *It is my eſtate that has proſcribed me*, ſaid a peaceable, quiet man, of the name of Aurelius, who lived far diſtant from all intrigues of ſtate.

Catiline diſtinguiſhes himſelf in the proſcription.

It is enough to mention that Catiline, who had been the executioner of his brother and brother in law, was the principal miniſter in this dreadful havoc. After having preſented to Sylla in the forum the bloody head of a perſon who had been proſcribed, he waſhed his hands in the luſtral water of a temple, that he might equally inſult religion and humanity.

Death of the two conſuls, Marius & Carbo.

Marius, being no longer able to defend Preneſte, (Paleſtrina) to which he had retired, agreed with one of his friends, that they ſhould put one another to death, and accordingly they fell by mutual wounds. Carbo, the other conſul, fled from Italy, and was purſued by Pompey, who ſaw him proſtrate at his feet, and ordered him to be put to death, though Carbo had a right to expect a proof of his gratitude. Thus the Romans revenged upon one another the cauſe of ſo many nations, who had been cruſhed by their ambition. Thus, the love of country being totally extinguiſhed by every vicious habit, the people gave themſelves up to the gratification of every violent paſſion, to wickedneſs and murder.

672. Sylla perpetual dictator.

One man being in poſſeſſion of the whole authority, the republic was at an end; it was by his ſword that he acquired and maintained his title; but he wanted one

yet

yet more reſpectable. As the very name of king would have made the Romans ſhudder with horrour, he cauſed it to be propoſed to the people, that a dictator ſhould be appointed for an unlimited time, to repair the evils which the ſtate had ſuſtained; and declared that if they thought proper to entruſt him, he was willing to diſcharge the duties of that office. This was in fact appointing himſelf, though by his addreſs he ſaved appearances. Thus perpetual deſpotiſm was eſtabliſhed by the votes of the people, for no power upon earth was more arbitrary than that of a dictator.

He makes ſome good laws to reſtore order in the ſtate.

Sylla, who had made himſelf the tyrant of Rome, by ſeizing favourable opportunities of accompliſhing his purpoſes, no ſooner found that he was abſolute maſter, than he made ſome very prudent laws to reſtore good order in the ſtate. He curbed murder and oppreſſion; he reſtored the courts of juſtice to the ſenate, into which he incorporated 300 knights, to fill up the vacancies occaſioned by the war and proſcriptions; he ſo regulated the order of ſucceſſion to offices, that no one could be appointed pretor till he had ſerved the office of queſtor, nor conſul without having previouſly been pretor; and according to the ancient laws, he enacted that an interval of ten years ſhould paſs before the ſame perſon could be re-elected conſul; he limited the power of the tribuneſhip, by prohibiting the tribunes from intermeddling in legiſlation, by ordering that they ſhould be choſen out of the body of the ſenate, and that they ſhould not expect to riſe to a higher dignity. From that time the tribuneſhip afforded no temptation to the ambitious; for how was it to be expected that the firſt offices of the republic would be renounced?

674. He boldly reſigns the dictatorſhip.

After having deſtroyed a hundred thouſand citizens in war, ninety ſenators, and above two thouſand ſix hundred knights by proſcriptions; after having eſtabliſhed his power upon the ruin of ſo many families, ſo many cities, and even the republic herſelf, it can ſcarcely be conceived that Sylla ſhould have inclination or courage to reſign the dictatorſhip; however, he not only did

did ſo, but even declared that he was ready to give an account of his conduct. He uſed afterwards to walk in public without any guard, and with very few friends. But he had freed ten thouſand ſlaves, and raiſed them to the rank of citizens; he had given poſſeſſions in the colonies to his old ſoldiers; he had liberally rewarded his adherents, and they alone were in poſſeſſion of all offices, both civil and military; he could not then be in want of protectors, and the terrour of his name ſerved him inſtead of guards. However, the very day on which he abdicated, a young man had the inſolence to affront him by abuſive language; Sylla, without returning him any anſwer, only ſaid—*That young man will be the cauſe that another in my ſituation will not think of reſigning.*

What might have been his ſecurity in caſe of danger.

Killed by his debauchery the next year.

Pleaſures and debauchery, to which he gave himſelf up more than ever, brought upon him the louſy diſeaſe, which put an end to his life, at the age of ſixty. He preſerved the activity of his genius to the very laſt, by being ſtill engaged in public affairs, and employing himſelf in writing his memoirs, a curious work, which is not now extant. It is ſaid that his epitaph, compoſed by himſelf, in ſubſtance declared, that *no man had ever done more good to his friends, or more harm to his enemies.* He had taken the ſurname of *the Fortunate*, either becauſe he thought fortune was attached to him, or wiſhed to have it generally believed. But if he was fortunate in his enterpriſes, he was ignorant of real happineſs, which is incompatible with the perplexities that agitate a ſoul under the dominion of the paſſions. Had he lived in an earlier age, he perhaps would have been a valuable citizen; but he was in ſome meaſure compelled to acts of cruelty by the ambition of Marius; and he only became an oppreſſor to check the oppreſſions of a cruel monſter. Such is the power which circumſtances have over the human mind, when it is no longer under prudent regulation.

676. Lepidus renews

From the example of Sylla, the people of Rome had been taught that the republic could be ſubdued by one

of

of her own citizens; and thus factions were daily multiplied. The conſul Lepidus, with very ſlender abilities, was ambitious of governing, but was oppoſed by his colleague, Catulus; and if the ſenate had not obliged them to ſwear that they would not take up arms, the civil war would have been rekindled. At the expiration of his conſulſhip, Lepidus thought himſelf diſengaged from his promiſe, and marched with an army to Rome, that he might obtain the conſulſhip a ſecond time, by compulſion. Being repulſed, and overcome by Catulus and Pompey, he paſſed over to Sardinia, where he died with vexation, at hearing of the infidelity of his wife.

the civil wars from motives of ambition.

He is defeated.

CHAP. IV.

The War of Sertorius.—Spartacus at the Head of a Body of Slaves.—Pompey defeats the Pirates.

SERTORIUS, a man truly formidable, revived the party of Marius in Spain. He was ſkilled in war, a profound politician, and poſſeſſed as much virtue as was practicable in the midſt of vice and faction. After having ſuffered many misfortunes, he retired among the Luſitanians, where he was entruſted with the command of their army, and very ſoon acquired a dominion over the minds of thoſe barbarians. A tame hind, by which he ſaid he was miraculouſly informed of things which he diſcovered by his prudence, was not too rude an inſtrument to deceive their ſuperſtition; but to this expedient he added others more effectual, victories and a prudent government.

Sertorius ſtill keeps up the party of Marius in Spain.

With a ſmall army he maintained an obſtinate war againſt a number of Roman generals, who commanded more than a hundred thouſand men. The art of encamping, ſkilful marches, ſtratagems, ſudden and ſeaſonable attacks without being expoſed to riſk, courage added to diſcipline, the admiration and confidence with which

His abilities & his victories.

which he inſpired his ſoldiers, ſeemed to increaſe his power upon every occaſion. During the life of Sylla, a number of illuſtrious malecontents fled to Sertorius for an aſylum, and of them he formed an aſſembly, which he called the Roman Senate. In fact, he might with ſome reaſon have uſed Corneille's expreſſion—*Rome is no longer in Rome, but wherever I am.*

678. He reſiſts Pompey & Metellus. Metellus, one of Sylla's lieutenants, having been unſucceſsful in carrying on the war againſt him, Pompey was ſent into Spain after the death of the dictator. Sertorius had been newly reinforced by a whole army, under the command of Perpenna, or Perperna, a ſeditious man, who attempted to obtain a ſettlement in that country, but was obliged by his ſoldiers to join that famous general. Pompey and Metellus, with their united force, were not able to overcome him; and the laſt of them was not aſhamed to ſet a price upon his head. A hundred talents, and twenty thouſand jugera of land, were promiſed as a reward to the aſſaſſin; and this policy, fit only for a band of robbers, expoſed Sertorius to a thouſand treacheries. He became ſevere, and a conſpiracy was formed by the people about his perſon, headed by Perpenna, who cauſed him to be baſely murdered at an entertainment.

680. Perpenna cauſes him to be aſſaſſinated.

Noble behaviour of Sertorius with regard to Mithridates. A ſhort time before his death, Sertorius received an embaſſy from Mithridates, who made him an offer of aſſiſtance, and deſired the reſtitution of Aſia; to which he nobly replied, that he would not prevent him from retaking Bithynia and Cappadocia, to which the Romans had no right; but as to Aſia Minor, which was their lawful poſſeſſion, he would not ſuffer it to be wreſted from them. *I ought to employ my power to aggrandize the republic*, added he, *and not to aggrandize myſelf by the loſſes of my country.* What a Roman!

Pompey finiſhes the war. On the death of Sertorius the whole ſtrength of his party fell. The traitor Perpenna, by taking upon him the command, only made the victory leſs difficult for Pompey. Being defeated, and taken priſoner, he attempted to ſave his life by a new piece of treachery; offering

offering the papers of Sertorius to the conqueror, by which his connexions with the principal people in Rome might be diſcovered. Pompey burnt the papers, and commanded Perpenna to be executed; after which he ordered a ſplendid monument of his exploits to be erected, with an inſcription, in which he boaſted that he had reduced eight hundred and ſeventy ſix cities, from the Alps to the moſt diſtant parts of Spain. We need not ſeek any other proof of the vanity of this famous general, who, notwithſtanding his ſucceſſes, was little entitled to the appellation of a great man, and who always deſired to be thought a matchleſs hero. His vanity

Though only a knight, he was granted a triumph; an honour which had been already conferred on him at his return from an expedition into Africa in the year 672. Sylla refuſing his conſent—*Think, then*, ſaid Pompey haughtily, *that more people worſhip the riſing than the ſetting ſun*. That daring expreſſion made the dictator, though averſe, yet give his conſent. He had the honour of a triumph.

Rome, though accuſtomed to conquer other nations, but herſelf already ſubdued by opulence and debauchery, was obliged to maintain a war equally dangerous and humiliating againſt her own ſlaves. The two rebellions of the ſlaves in Sicily ſhew how much the Roman yoke was deteſted; but the preſent was a much more dreadful proof. A number of theſe unfortunate people, whom an unjuſt fate had reduced to ſlavery, moſtly Gauls or Thracians, had been employed in the profeſſion of gladiators againſt their wills. Seventy eight of them, under the conduct of Spartacus, a Thracian, whoſe merit deſerved a better fortune, broke their chains, and defeated ſome troops who were ſent in purſuit of them; a pretor, at the head of three thouſand men, met with the ſame diſgrace. Theſe firſt ſucceſſes drawing to their ſtandard a great many more ſlaves, the company of Spartacus at laſt became a numerous army, and ſo formidable, that two conſuls and a pretor were ſent againſt them. He defeated all the three, and with the more glory, as the Gauls, having left his army, were cut to pieces by the Romans. Deſertion and war of the gladiators.

Rome

682. They are defeated by Craſſus.

Rome was threatened, and he might have laid ſiege to the city with a body of a hundred and twenty thouſand ſlaves; but Craſſus, one of the beſt generals of the republic, was at laſt ſent againſt him, who, by a prudent ſeverity, having reſtored diſcipline, which had been almoſt annihilated, brought the war to a happy concluſion. Spartacus, being compelled by the ſlaves to come to a deciſive engagement, conducted himſelf with equal ſkill and bravery. He killed his horſe the moment the battle was going to begin. *If I am conqueror*, ſaid he, *I ſhall not want a horſe; but if I am conquered, I ſhall have no occaſion for one.* Victory was for a conſiderable time doubtful, but at laſt the ſlaves were defeated, and their heroic chief, all covered with wounds, expired in the heat of action. The rebels loſt forty thouſand men.

Pompey aſcribes the honour of the victory to himſelf.

Five thouſand of the fugitives, having rallied, were eaſily defeated by Pompey, who wrote to the ſenate in the ſame ſtyle as if he had ſaved the republic. *Craſſus has gained a victory over the ſlaves, but I have deſtroyed the very ſeeds of rebellion.* This ambitious man made every thing turn to his own advantage; and, by exaggerating his ſervices, dazzled the multitude. To get the whole power into his hands, he wanted to have it believed, that he was eſſentially neceſſary to them in all their affairs, and they readily gave credit to his aſſertions. Being choſen conſul when only thirty four years of age, and without having ſerved the office of queſtor, he annulled the beſt laws which were made by Sylla; he reſtored the ancient powers to the tribunes, and by flattering the prejudices of the people, became their idol. His colleague and rival, the wealthy Craſſus, fruitleſsly endeavoured to acquire equal popularity, by giving a feaſt at ten thouſand tables, and diſtributing corn to the poor for three months. This immenſe profuſion, though perhaps the very beſt means of captivating a corrupt multitude, could not avail againſt the exceſſive credit in which Pompey ſtood with the people.

He became the idol of the people, notwithſtanding the liberalities of Craſſus.

686. He acquires im-

The ſeas were infeſted by a ſwarm of pirates, who had iſſued from the coaſts of Cilicia, and pillaged even

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the temples, laid waſte the provinces, ruined commerce, and occaſioned a dreadful famine. No man was thought capable of ſubduing them but Pompey. A law was propoſed by the tribune Gabinius, to appoint him to the command, with a power to levy as many ſoldiers and ſailors as he pleaſed; to draw as much money from the public treaſury, as he thought neceſſary, without being obliged to give an account of it; and to chooſe fifteen lieutenants from the ſenate. His authority was to extend over the whole Mediterranean, and fifty miles within land; his commiſſion to continue three years. The moſt vigorous reſiſtance was made to this deteſtable law, which tended to make a monarch of a private citizen; and even Pompey, from falſe modeſty, affected to oppoſe it; however, it was paſſed, and with the greater advantage to him, as he was allowed five hundred ſhips, and a hundred and twenty five thouſand land forces, with ſix thouſand Attic talents. In four months the pirates were totally diſperſed, and the popular enthuſiaſm in favour of the general increaſed. If he did not abuſe his power, it was from a dread of being ſuſpected of tyranny. By this ſeeming moderation, he hoped to increaſe his power; nor was he diſappointed, and a new theatre was opened to him by the war in Aſia.

moderate power by the Gabinian law.

He diſperſes the pirates.

CHAP. V.

The War with Mithridates ended.—Lucullus ſupplanted by Pompey.

THAT implacable hatred which Mithridates entertained againſt the Romans made him ſubmit to neceſſity only in hopes of more favourable opportunities; and he had twice renewed the war ſince the departure of Sylla. About the time that Sertorius ſignalized himſelf in Spain, Nicomedes, king of Bithynia, entered into a league with the Roman republic; and the king of Pontus was reſolved to wreſt Bithynia from

Mithridates had renewed the war, & diſciplined his army.

a people who were ambitious to give law to the whole world. Inſtructed by experience, he baniſhed the pomp of Aſia from his army, and in its place ſubſtituted the arms and diſcipline of the Romans: in ſhort, his troops were well trained, and he himſelf a ſkilful warrior.

679. Lucullus ſent againſt him.

In the year 679, the two conſuls, Cotta and Lucullus, were ſent againſt him. To a taſte for learning and the ſciences, Lucullus added every military talent, which he acquired by having ſerved under Sylla in quality of queſtor; and of courſe Cicero greatly exaggerates, when he ſays, that he learnt to be a general only from books and converſation during his paſſage from Rome to Aſia.

His conduct and ſucceſs.

As ſoon as Lucullus aſſumed the command, he gave proofs of ſuperiour genius. He checked the avarice of the tax gatherers, and the licentiouſneſs of the army; he ſaved his colleague, who had been defeated by Mithridates, and made that prince raiſe the ſiege of Cyzicum, with the loſs, as it is ſaid, of three hundred thouſand men, driving him firſt out of Bithynia, and then out of his own kingdom. It was upon this occaſion that that cruel monarch gave orders to poiſon his ſiſters and wives, particularly the famous Monimia, to prevent their falling into the hands of the conqueror.

He defeats Tigranes, king of Armenia.

Having retired to the territories of his ſon in law, Tigranes, king of Armenia, he perſuaded him to eſpouſe his cauſe, and join in the quarrel; but that monarch, with an innumerable army, and immenſe treaſures, was only a compoſition of ſilly pride and blind temerity.

684.

In the year 684, Lucullus paſſed the Euphrates and the Tigris without any difficulty, becauſe it was not imagined that he would have been bold enough to make the attempt, and then marched againſt the Armenians, who were twenty times his number. Some perſon obſerving to him that that was an unlucky day, and marked ſo in the calendar—*Very well*, ſaid he, *I will make it a lucky day*. In fact, the enemy were cut to pieces, and his victory was followed by the taking of Tigranocerta. The next year he paſſed mount Taurus. Tigranes and Mithridates having joined, he attacked

tacked them, and put them to flight. Nothing could equal the Roman valour, but they had loſt ſome virtues of no leſs conſequence.

The mutinous diſpoſition of his army the cauſe of misfortunes.

Though poſſeſſed of the greateſt abilities, Lucullus had not the talent of making himſelf beloved; both officers and ſoldiers bore his haughtineſs and ſeverity in ſupport of diſcipline with the greater impatience, as they were led by the corruption of their manners into every kind of licentiouſneſs. They very well knew that there were people at Rome who inveighed againſt him, becauſe they were envious of his merit, and accuſed him of prolonging the war from views of intereſt and ambition. His army mutinied ſeveral times, and Tigranes and Mithridates took that opportunity to recover their kingdoms. A Roman army, commanded by Triagrius, was totally defeated, and Lucullus ſaw himſelf abandoned by his ſoldiers at the very time he was anxious to repair the misfortune.

687. The Manilian law gives the command to Pompey.

This circumſtance was equally diſgraceful to Rome and favourable to Pompey. The pirates had been lately reduced, and their conqueror was ſtill in Aſia, which made his adherents zealouſly ſeize the opportunity. Manilius, the tribune, propoſed that Lucullus ſhould be recalled, and the command of the war againſt Tigranes and Mithridates be given to Pompey, with all the powers granted him by the Gabinian law; by which he was entruſted with the whole force of the republic, and made abſolute both by ſea and land. The republicans exclaimed with indignation; but Cæſar, who flattered the multitude, that he might raiſe himſelf above all law, Cicero, at that time pretor, and who ſtood in need of Pompey's friendſhip, with other eminent perſons, who were hurried away by the torrent, or led by ſelfiſh motives, or dazzled by the ſplendid reputation of the general, concurred in ſupport of the Manilian law. The inconſiderate multitude gave way to their preſent paſſion, without once reflecting that they might one day become the victim of their own raſhneſs.

Pompey conceals his ambition by hypocrisy.

Here we have an instance to what low, grofs hypocrify, ambition will fometimes ftoop. Pompey had employed every means to accompliſh this affair; and when he received the news, the better to conceal his ſatisfaction, he aſſumed an appearance of ſorrow. *Shall I never enjoy repoſe?* ſaid he. *Cannot I have leave to live in retirement, with a beloved wife? Happy they who can paſs their days in the peaceful boſom of obſcurity!* Even his friends were ſhocked at this hypocriſy; but it had its effect upon the vulgar, for they are eaſily deceived by appearances.

He undervalues the ſervices of Lucullus.

If Pompey had been worthy of his good fortune, he at leaſt would have reſpected the merit and ſervices of Lucullus: but, on the contrary, he endeavoured to humble him, and, without the leaſt reſerve, undervalued whatever he had done. He alledged, that Lucullus had no difficulties to encounter, and had no other view in proſecuting the war but accumulating riches. Lucullus, wounded by ſuch injurious language, reproached his rival, with more reaſon, of being deſirous to appropriate to himſelf the honours which were due to another; of having been ſolicitous to obtain the command againſt enemies already conquered; and of coming, at the end of every war, to ſnatch the honour of concluding it out of the hands of the general, like thoſe cowardly birds who only prey upon carcaſes. Their mutual animoſity was ſharpened by an interview; but as his victories could not be forgotten, a triumph was decreed to Lucullus.

Their mutual reproaches.

Lucullus retires.

That noble Roman paſſed the reſt of his life in luxurious retirement; but it was dedicated to ſtudy, and the pleaſures of his friends. That magnificence and luxury, which, after the conqueſts in Aſia, could not fail to change the Roman manners, was never carried to ſuch a pitch as by him. One day that he was without company, his ſteward cauſed a ſupper to be ſerved up to him which was leſs ſumptuous than common. *Do you not know*, ſaid he, out of humour, *that Lucullus is to ſup to night with Lucullus?* Here we ſee one of the greateſt

His magnificence.

men

men of the republic metamorphoſed, if we may uſe the expreſſion, into a Perſian ſatrap.

Mithridates, being weakened by ſo many loſſes, and abandoned by his allies, whom either fear or artifice had united with Rome, very ſoon ſunk under the exertions of a too powerful enemy, from whom he fled till he reached the Boſphorus: however, his courage never forſook him, and he was propoſing to trace the ſteps of Hannibal, and carry the war into Italy, when a rebellion was ſtirred up againſt him by his ſon Pharnaces. While he was beſieged in one of his caſtles by the rebels, after having tried poiſon unſucceſsfully, he ſtabbed himſelf with his ſword. That cruel diſtruſt, which he had even of his own family, could not ſave him from treachery; and though he was always beſet with domeſtic enemies, he had the honour of reſiſting the Romans for almoſt thirty years. At the news of his death, they expreſſed the moſt indecent joy; and Pharnaces obtained the kingdom of Boſphorus as a reward of his parricide.

Mithridates, though conquered, forms a project to carry the war into Italy.

The treachery of his ſon rewarded by the Romans.

Inſtead of purſuing Mithridates, Pompey attacked the kingdom of Syria, which had been always torn in pieces by inteſtine wars. Tigranes had been in poſſeſſion of it for eighteen years; but Antiochus XIII. ſurnamed Aſiaticus, and the lawful heir of the Seleucidæ, had been ſettled in it by Lucullus, who was ſtript of it by Pompey, for no other reaſon but to deſtroy the work of Lucullus; and it was reduced into a Roman province without oppoſition. From thence he paſſed into Judea, and declared in favour of Hyrcanus, againſt his brother Ariſtobalus, who contended with him for the crown; forced the temple of Jeruſalem, carried off Ariſtobalus priſoner, and reſtored the dignity of high prieſt, with the title of prince of the Jews to Hyrcanus. After diſtributing immenſe riches among his ſoldiers, which Appian ſays amounted to ſixteen thouſand talents, he returned to Italy. Every foot ſoldier had fifteen hundred drachmæ. Thus did the generals purchaſe troops and adherents at the expenſe of the republic.

The expedition of Pompey into Aſia.

Syria a Roman province.

He enriches his army and adherents.

Pompey indulges his friends in every liberty.

Pompey was never ſeen to imitate that magnificence and luxury which was become ſo common, but he winked at the licentiouſneſs of his friends, and gave up the people to their avarice and oppreſſion. His freed man, Demetrius, being immenſely rich, diſplayed all the inſolence of a ſlave, who had attained the ſummit of power. Is it poſſible to praiſe the moderation of a man, whoſe friends and even ſlaves indulge in every kind of licentiouſneſs under his protection?

CHAP. VI.

Conſpiracy of Catiline.—The Triumvirate of Pompey, Craſſus, and Cæſar.

Catiline's conſpiracy

BEFORE the return of Pompey, Rome narrowly eſcaped being buried in her own ruins, by the wickedneſs of ſome of her citizens. Catiline, deſcended of an illuſtrious family; of a fiery temper, which no danger could diſmay, yet capable of the deepeſt diſſimulation; overwhelmed with debts, ſtained with the fouleſt crimes, and having no reſource but what was ſuggeſted by deſpair; formed a ſcheme for extirpating the whole body of ſenators, and, like Sylla, ſeizing the ſovereign authority. To carry his point, he employed every means of corruption—money, pleaſures, promiſes and hopes. The debauched, the diſcontented, the ambitious, the inſatiable and bankrupt nobility, the heedleſs and giddy multitude, every one as they were led by their prevailing paſſion, flocked in crowds to join his party. A ſuperiour genius was needful to ſave the republic, and that glory was reſerved for Cicero.

690. The plot diſcovered to Cicero.

This excellent orator, whoſe virtue, underſtanding and abilities would have been ſtill more admired if their luſtre had not been a little obſcured by vanity, canvaſſed for the conſular dignity, when the conſpiracy of Catiline was diſcovered to him by a woman. Curius, one of the conſpirators, was in love with Fulvia, and ſeeing himſelf

himſelf deſpiſed, after he had ſacrificed to her his whole fortune, hoped to recover her favour by diſcovering the conſpiracy, and making a diſplay of the riches which he hoped to acquire. A woman who had proved unfaithful to her huſband, could not be otherwiſe to a diſgraced lover. Fulvia diſcovered the ſecret, and it reached the ears of Cicero. Notwithſtanding the intrigues of the nobility, who deſpiſed him becauſe he was a new man, yet ſo ably did he employ his knowledge of that ſecret, that he obtained the conſulſhip. His competitor Catiline was excluded, and Anthony given to him for a colleague, whoſe indolence was ſuch as to leave him all the credit of the adminiſtration.

Cicero choſen conſul.

The enraged Catiline, ſtill more animated with a deſire of vengeance, hurried on the execution of his deſigns; a day was fixed for ſetting fire to the city in different quarters, and in the confuſion to aſſaſſinate the leaders of the ſenate, particularly Cicero; to ſeize the capitol; to renew, and even ſurpaſs, all the horrours committed by Sylla. But Cicero, from whoſe prudence nothing could be hid, was watchful for the preſervation of the republic, and diſcovered the whole conſpiracy to the ſenate; upon which an unlimited power was immediately given to the conſuls, according to the form commonly uſed in caſes of extraordinary danger. The eloquence of the orator filled Catiline with confuſion, and drove him from Rome. The other leaders of the conſpiracy were ſeized, convicted, and condemned to ſuffer death by a decree of the ſenate, which ſentence was executed during the night in the priſon. A body of troops marched againſt Catiline, who, with a number of rebels, had advanced towards Gaul, in order to raiſe and to excite an inſurrection in that country. He was attacked, and made a brave defence, but being irrecoverably defeated, he threw himſelf into the midſt of the enemy, and fell all covered with wounds. He was one of thoſe men who are born to perform great actions, but by being ſlaves to their paſſions, ſeem to be only capable of enormous wickedneſs.

He prevents the conſpiracy from taking effect.

Catiline defeated and killed.

Before

Agrarian law of Rulius.

Before the conſpiracy was diſcovered, Cicero, even with the approbation of the people, had rejected an Agrarian law, propoſed by Rullus the tribune, bearing that ten commiſſioners ſhould be appointed for five years with almoſt unlimited authority. Such laws, at a time when ambition was ſo violent, and integrity uncommon, could only tend to overturn the ſtate, for they could not poſſibly be executed without occaſioning civil wars. The Decemviri would have employed their power to amaſs fortunes; the people would have had new tyrants, and the republic new maſters. Rullus intended to get the power into his own hands; and he affected a zeal for the good of the public only to conceal his ſelfiſh views.

The riſe of Cæſar.

Julius Cæſar, the ſon in law of Cinna, a patrician, who greatly ſurpaſſed Rullus both by the luſtre of his birth and the ſuperiority of his abilities, was ſilently forming the greateſt enterpriſes. His effeminacy, his taſte for dreſs, his libertiniſm in his early days, ſeemed to prognoſticate that he would be a man of pleaſure, from whom Rome had nothing either to hope or fear; and, to ſave him from proſcription, he was repreſented as ſuch to Sylla. But the dictator was a better judge of his character. *Do you not ſee in that young man*, ſaid he, *more than one Marius?* Upon hearing this, Cæſar fled from Rome; but the moment he could enter into the career of ambition, he appeared with all the advantages of manly eloquence, and profound policy. To gain the attachment of the people to his intereſt, he exhauſted his patrimony in largeſſes to the people and the exhibition of public ſhows. He purchaſed offices with impunity, and revived the ſpirits of the remains of Marius's party.

Anecdotes which diſcover his character.

The purſuit of honour and glory poſſeſſed his whole ſoul. One day when he was reading the life of Alexander—*Alas*, ſaid he, with tears in his eyes, *Alexander had conquered a number of kingdoms at my age, whereas I have yet done nothing worthy of notice.* Upon another occaſion, when he was paſſing through a little village in the

the Alps, and hearing one of his attendants aſk, in a tone of raillery, whether they canvaſſed for the offices in that place, he anſwered—*I would rather be the firſt man in this village than the ſecond in Rome.* Such inſtances diſplay a man's real character.

But Pompey, at his return to Rome in the year 692, being accuſtomed to government and ſucceſs, would not endure either a ſuperiour or an equal. Naturally an enemy to oppreſſion, perhaps rather from weakneſs than moderation, he diſmiſſed his army immediately upon their arrival, having imprudently flattered himſelf with the belief that he would continue maſter of the republic without their aſſiſtance. He found a formidable enemy in Craſſus, who by his immenſe riches had gained a very ſtrong party. Theſe two rivals entertained a moſt inveterate hatred againſt each other; and their influence in the ſenate was nearly equal. Cæſar wanted to be conſul, and having occaſion for the aid of one of theſe rivals, which it was impoſſible for him to obtain without making the other his enemy, by a maſter ſtroke in politics, of which no other man was capable, reconciled them, and united his intereſt with theirs; or rather, by procuring this union, eſtabliſhed his own upon their joint credit. Cato, ſo famous for that ſtoical virtue which he carried to exceſs, foreſaw that liberty would be deſtroyed by this triumvirate: however, a reconciliation, which ſeemed to extinguiſh the flame of diſcord, was univerſally applauded.

692. He artfully reconciles Pompey and Craſſus, to ſupport himſelf by their credit.

The triumvirate.

Cato foreſaw the conſequences.

Immediately after Cæſar had obtained the conſulſhip by the intereſt of Pompey and Craſſus, he propoſed an Agrarian law, by which he hoped to gain the favour of the people. This law was not attended with the inconveniences to which the former were expoſed. It was limited to certain lands in the country of Campania, which were to be divided among twenty thouſand poor citizens who had at leaſt three children. It was couched in ſuch terms as to remove every ſuſpicion of tyranny: but nevertheleſs it was oppoſed by Cato, and Bibulus the conſul, and by the greateſt part of the ſenate, ſo that

Cæſar paſſes an Agrarian law wiſer than any of the preceding.

that the triumvirate were obliged to have recourſe to the people. Pompey and Craſſus loudly declared for the law, and Bibulus being driven out of the aſſembly with inſult, the ſenate was reduced to ſilence, and obliged to drop all oppoſition.

His addreſs to ſecure Pompey and get rid of Cicero.

Cæſar was maſter of ſuch infinite addreſs, that he never failed to accompliſh his purpoſe. He gave his daughter in marriage to Pompey, leſt the zealous republicans ſhould deprive him of this ſupport. He cauſed a law to be paſſed, by which the ſenators and magiſtrates were obliged to take an oath that they would never propoſe any thing in oppoſition to what had been determined by the popular aſſemblies during his conſulſhip: but dreading the zeal and eloquence of Cicero, he procured the tribuneſhip to the orator's mortal enemy, the ſeditious Clodius, who had been lately accuſed of profaning the myſteries of the *Bona Dea*, and even with having an intrigue with the wife of Cæſar. And laſtly, foreſeeing that a military power would enable him to execute all his purpoſes, he procured the government of Gaul for five years, with the command of four legions.

695. Clodius oppreſſes Cicero.

A law was propoſed very ſoon after by Clodius, to declare criminal whoever had put a citizen to death before the judgment of the people had been obtained. This was a battery levelled againſt Cicero, who had put to death the accomplices of Catiline before ſentence had been paſſed on them by the people; but in this he only obeyed the orders of the ſenate, and his conduct was amply vindicated by the neceſſity of the conjuncture. He no ſooner ſaw himſelf attacked, than the want of reſolution betrayed the powers of his genius. Dreſſed in mourning, dejected, and ſuppliant, he begged for aſſiſtance, but could find none; the ungrateful Pompey ſhut his gate againſt him. Cicero prevented the decree for his baniſhment, quitted Rome, and retired to Greece. His exceſſive ſorrow, his bitter complaints againſt his beſt friends, prove that this philoſophy, of which he made ſuch parade, was more the language of his head than of his heart.

Clodius,

He likewise removes Cato.

Clodius, desirous likewise to get rid of Cato, that inflexible republican, who incessantly continued to combat vice and tyranny, employed him to dethrone Ptolemy king of Cyprus. That prince was the personal enemy of the tribune, who procured him to be condemned as an enemy of the republic; but Ptolemy poisoned himself before the arrival of Cato.

696. Pompey obtains the recall of Cicero, who procures him new powers.

Pompey at last became sensible of his mistake. Clodius no longer paid court to him, and Cæsar's first campaign in Gaul seemed to have eclipsed all his glory. Jealous of the one, and exasperated against the other, he procured the recall of Cicero, whom he had so meanly abandoned. Cicero, at his return, was loaded with honours; he passed through Italy in a kind of triumph, and his houses were rebuilt at the expense of the public. Pompey very soon found the benefit of his credit. A scarcity of corn afforded him an opportunity of procuring for his friend the superintendence of provisions through the whole empire, with very extensive powers, for five years. By such commissions the property of the public was put into the hands of a few ambitious men, who easily accumulated great fortunes.

697. Commands granted to the triumvirs for five years.

As the triumvirate had occasion for mutual support, they entered into new engagements. Pompey and Crassus were made consuls with important governments for five years; the first in Spain, and the other in Syria, Greece, and Egypt. The friends of Cæsar refused their consent, except upon condition that he should be likewise continued five years in the government of Gaul. These three generals were authorized to levy as many troops, and to exact from the kings, and other allies of Rome, as much money and other assistance as they deemed necessary; which was in fact making them absolute.

700. Crassus defeated and killed by the Parthians.

The insatiable Crassus, who heaped up treasure upon treasure, who said that no man was rich unless he was able to support an army, and who undoubtedly was still poor himself amidst all his opulence, made haste to enter Asia, that he might satiate his avaricious desires. Having

ing pillaged the temple of Jeruſalem, he engaged in an imprudent expedition againſt the Parthians, induced by no motive but the hope of raviſhing from them their immenſe riches. But the Parthians were a warlike people, who, from their dexterity in archery and ſkill in horſemanſhip, were even formidable in their flight; ſo that in the end Craſſus and his ſon were killed in the field, and the whole Roman army cut in pieces. The balance of power which he held between Cæſar and Pompey was now broken; diſcord could not fail to follow, and nothing was to be ſeen at Rome but factions and every kind of diſorder. All employments were purchaſed openly, and their canvaſſings were attended with acts of violence: Clodius was killed by Milo, which ſerved as a ſignal for taking up arms.

Murder of Clodius.

701. Pompey ſole conſul.

Upon this occaſion the friends of Pompey attempted to get him choſen dictator, which was what he ſecretly wiſhed; but Cato, for the preſervation of liberty, by keeping him ſubject to the laws, propoſed that there ſhould be no other conſul, becauſe in that caſe he would be ſtill accountable for his conduct. Though it was without precedent, Pompey was choſen ſole conſul, with a grant of new troops, and a revenue of a thouſand talents to ſupport his army; at the ſame time the government of Spain was continued to him, with a power of adminiſtering it by his lieutenants. He choſe a colleague before the expiration of his conſulſhip, and by this feigned moderation blinded the ſenate.

CHAP. VII.

Conqueſt of Gaul.—Breach between Cæſar and Pompey.—A Civil War.

Succeſs of Cæſar in Gaul.

IN leſs than ten years Cæſar had overcome the Helvetians, defeated Arioviſtus, one of the kings of Germany, ſubdued the Belgæ, reduced all Gaul into a Roman province, and carried the terrour of his arms even into

into Great Britian. Among his exploits are reckoned the taking of eight hundred towns, reducing three hundred ſtates, and defeating three millions of men in different actions. The Gauls were a brave people, but divided into ſmall ſtates under chiefs who had but little authority. It was not ſolely by his valour and military talents that he reduced them, but likewiſe by his artful policy, which he employed in fomenting their quarrels and arming them againſt one another.

His conduct to make himſelf maſter of Rome.

Intrepid, ſober, indefatigable, always ready for action, always attentive to buſineſs, and even while purſuing the enemy, watching the intrigues carried on at Rome; he ſpared no coſt to purchaſe votes, and ſecure followers; the conſul Emilius alone coſt him a hundred and fifty talents. He enriched his officers and ſoldiers, who were no longer the troops of the ſtate. In a word, he did without ſcruple whatever could advance his power, and every obſtacle was ſurmounted by his extraordinary abilities.

Open rupture between Cæſar and Pompey.

The term of his government was drawing to an end, and, by depriving him of his military command, was to reduce him to a level with his fellow citizens. This was the private wiſh of Pompey, who ſecretly ſolicited his recall; but Curio the tribune, who had been bought over by Cæſar, warded off that blow without ſeeming to be of either party. He propoſed that both theſe generals ſhould either be continued or recalled, as they were equally capable of diſturbing the republic. Whatever moderation might be affected by Pompey, yet he was unwilling to lay down his command before Cæſar; therefore Curio was of opinion, that both the one and the other, if they kept poſſeſſion of their governments, ſhould be declared enemies of the republic. Cæſar offered to reſign, upon condition that his rival ſhould; but Pompey, who was not ſo able nor clear ſighted, being perſuaded that Cæſar's army would abandon their general, carried his raſh confidence ſo far as to ſay—*that he needed only to ſtamp upon the ground, and an army would ſtart up.*

After

The latter through a blind confidence rejects all terms of accommodation.

After ſome negotiations he rejected every means of accommodation that was propoſed, and thereby rendered a civil war inevitable. The conſuls and ſenate were of his party; the people, and a victorious army, commanded by the greateſt general the world ever ſaw, was on the other. The firſt had a greater appearance of juſtice; the other, ſuperiour abilities, courage, and a greater variety of reſources. The moſt unſpotted juſtice in ſuch circumſtances would find herſelf too weak to contend.

704. Cæſar paſſes the Rubicon; Rome in conſternation.

Cæſar was declared an enemy of Rome if he refuſed to reſign the command; and Pompey, though he was not conſul, was entruſted with the defence of the republic. Cæſar was on the banks of the Rubicon, a ſmall river which parted Ciſalpine Gaul from the reſt of Italy, where he heſitated for ſome time—*If I do not paſs*, ſaid he, *I am ruined*; *If I do paſs, to what woes is Rome expoſed!* But, recollecting the hatred of his adverſaries, he exclaimed, *The die is caſt*, paſſed the river, took poſſeſſion of Rimini, and ſpread the alarm even to the centre of Rome. The ſenate declared that there was a *tumult*, that is to ſay, the city was in danger, and that all the citizens, without exception, ſhould fly to arms.

705. Battle of Pharſalia.

No preparations had been made againſt an enemy ſo active and formidable. Pompey not only left the city, but likewiſe quitted Italy. Cæſar, having made himſelf maſter of the public treaſury, from whence he drew an immenſe ſum, ſet out to reduce Spain, where his opponents were very powerful. He returned victorious, and, purſuing his rival into Macedonia, gained the deciſive battle of Pharſalia. In this action it was evidently ſeen, that ſuperiority of numbers avails nothing againſt courage and diſcipline. A crowd of young patricians, enervated by luxury, placed a blind confidence in Pompey, and calculated beforehand the advantages of a victory which they concluded was certain. Cæſar, obſerving that a dread of being diſfigured would make a ſtronger impreſſion upon them than a thirſt of glory, ordered his veterans to aim at their faces; and in fact they

they were very ſoon routed. The conqueror found in the camp of the enemy the whole apparatus of Aſiatic luxury.

Cæſar's moderation.

He threw all Pompey's papers into the fire, without reading one. *I would rather not be acquainted with crimes*, ſaid he, *than be obliged to puniſh them.* He ſighed heavily at ſeeing the field of battle covered with dead bodies; and at leaſt endeavoured to repair, by an heroic clemency, the evils of which he was obliged to be the author.

The court of Egypt cauſes Pompey to be aſſaſſinated.

The famous Pompey, who had ſo long been maſter of the republic, and in ſome degree of fortune, but now vanquiſhed, a fugitive and wanderer, fled at laſt into Egypt, where he hoped to find a ſecure aſylum from young Ptolemy, whoſe father Auletes, after his expulſion by the inhabitants of Alexandria, he had re-eſtabliſhed on the throne; but how few friends does misfortune leave! Cæſar purſued him with great eagerneſs, and the court of Egypt heſitated for ſome time what part they ſhould take; but at laſt, being led by the baſe counſels of Theodotus, the rhetorician, they were perſuaded to commit an act of treachery and cruel murder, as the only means of gaining the favour of Cæſar; they profeſſed to receive Pompey with open arms, and at that inſtant cauſed him to be aſſaſſinated. They preſented his head to his antagoniſt; but, inſtead of ſhewing that pleaſure which they expected, he only gave ſigns of indignation and ſorrow.

War of Alexandria.

Cleopatra, the ſiſter and wife of the king of Egypt, was entitled, by their father's will, to ſhare the throne with him, and ſupported her claim by force of arms. Cæſar took upon him to decide the diſpute in the name of the Roman people, and the beauty of Cleopatra inſpired him with ſentiments which gave room to ſuſpect his impartiality; for this reaſon Photinus, the miniſter of Ptolemy, kindled the war of Alexandria, in which both the king and his miniſter periſhed. Cæſar, having placed Cleopatra upon the throne, inſtantly marched to oppoſe Pharnaces, the ſon of Mithridates and king of

Cæſar gives Egypt to Cleopatra.

His victory over Pharnaces.

of Boſphorus, who was making extenſive conqueſts in Aſia. He gave an account of his expedition in three words, *Veni, vidi, vici.**

706. He returns to Rome, where he is abſolute.

Having been made conſul for five years, dictator one year, perpetual chief of the college of tribunes, with authority to make peace or war as he judged proper, he appeared again at Rome in two years after his paſſage over the Rubicon, in poſſeſſion of abſolute power. Far from following the example of Sylla, who wanted to ſecure his power by ſacrificing his fellow citizens, he was eager to offer pardon to all, and even heaped acts of kindneſs upon a number of his principal enemies; but as yet all were not ſubdued. During his ſtay in Egypt, where an indiſcreet amour made him neglect his affairs, the ſons of Pompey, Cato, Scipio, and ſome other republicans, had collected a body of forces in Africa, where they prepared to make a vigorous defence. But who could conquer Cæſar?

War in Africa.

Having croſſed the ſea, he gained three battles ſucceſſively. Cato had fruitleſſly recommended to his party not to expoſe their army to the hazard of a defeat; and, ſhutting himſelf up in Utica, ſeemed to revive the Roman ſenate, and to preſerve ſome ideas of liberty; but his hopes very ſoon vaniſhed. He ſaw all around him entirely diſheartened, and propoſed to his friends, either to fly, or implore mercy from the conqueror: but for himſelf he was determined not to ſurvive the liberty of his country. After having calmly converſed with two philoſophers, and read the dialogue of Plato upon the immortality of the ſoul, feeling the point of his ſword, he ſaid—*I am at laſt my own maſter.* Having ſlept ſome time, when he waked, he ſtabbed himſelf; at the noiſe ſome of his friends ran to offer their aſſiſtance, and dreſſed the wound, but he tore it open and expired. Upon the news being brought to Cæſar, he exclaimed—*O Cato, I envy thee thy death, ſince thou didſt envy me the honour of preſerving thy life.* It would indeed have been more glorious to ſave than to conquer ſuch an enemy.

Cato kills himſelf.

If

* I came, I ſaw, I overcame.

If Cato had not been an enthuſiaſt in virtue, and had endeavoured by ſome practicable methods to correct diſorder inſtead of rigidly cenſuring the manners of the times, his patriotiſm and greatneſs of ſoul might have effected much good, or prevented much evil; but the obſervation of Cicero is very juſt: By conducting himſelf *as if he was in the republic of Plato, and not among the the dregs of Romulus*, his ſeverity was ſeldom uſeful, ſometimes hurtful. Theſe were not the days of Fabricius; Rome, immerſed in corruption, could no longer be governed by the ancient principles. It was neceſſary to comply with circumſtances, and the exigences of affairs. Cato made himſelf reſpectable by obſerving maxims ſunk in oblivion, but he miſcarried by endeavouring to force the obſervation of them on others. Ought prudence to attempt impoſſibilities?

That virtuous Roman wanted prudence.

CHAP. VIII.

Cæſar makes himſelf Maſter of the Republic.—His Death.

THE honours which were laviſhed upon Cæſar at his return, ſufficiently prove that nothing but the mere ſhadow of republican government was left. A ſolemn thankſgiving to the gods was appointed for his victories; the dictatorſhip was at firſt prolonged to him for ten years, and afterwards for life; with the title of reformer of manners; the authority of cenſor, which was formerly ſhared by two magiſtrates, was conferred upon him alone; his perſon was declared inviolably ſacred; his ſtatue was placed in the capitol, by the ſide of Jupiter's, with the following ſacrilegious inſcription—*To the demigod Cæſar.* Four triumphs were decreed to him in one month, upon which occaſion gold and ſilver vaſes were diſplayed to the amount of ſixty five thouſand talents.

708. Exceſſive honours laviſhed upon Cæſar.

His prodigality to his ſoldiers and the people, the entertainments, games, and magnificent ſhews, which he exhibited,

His prodigality.

exhibited, delighted the multitude, whom the charms of pleaſure allured to ſlavery. A feaſt which was ſerved up on twenty two thouſand tables, in the ſtreets of the city, gives us an idea of his profuſion. So much were the manners of the Romans at this time corrupted, that the knights were not aſhamed to fight in the *arena* with the common gladiators.

He re-eſtabliſhes order, and makes good laws.

The mildneſs of Cæſar's diſpoſition, his application to the cares of government, and the prudence of his laws, were the beſt inſtruments for varniſhing his ambitious attempts. He re-eſtabliſhed good order in the city, and attracted to it a number of inhabitants; encouraged population by rewards; checked extravagant luxury, and limited the duration of the government of the provinces, fixing the pretorian to one year, and the conſular to two.

He reforms the calendar, which had been greatly confuſed by the pontiffs.

In quality of ſovereign pontiff he reformed the calendar, into which the pontiffs, either through ignorance, or from ſome intereſted motives, had introduced the greateſt confuſion. The year at that time, according to their computation, conſiſted of twelve lunar months with an intercalation of twenty two or twenty three days alternately, at the end of every two years; but the pontiffs either introduced or omitted the intercalation, according to circumſtances, as they wanted to abridge or to prolong the time of the magiſtrates continuing in office; and by this means all order was ſubverted. Soſigenes, an aſtronomer of Alexandria, cleared up this chaos, and the ſolar year of three hundred and ſixty five days, with an intercalation of one day every fourth year, was eſtabliſhed by Cæſar. Beſide the intercalary month it was neceſſary to add ſixty ſeven days to the firſt year.

This excellent reformation cenſured.

Even this excellent reformation, which deſerved the higheſt encomiums, was cenſured, like every thing which offends old cuſtoms and vulgar prejudices. Cicero himſelf, who was more capable than any man of ſeeing its merit, made it a ſubject of indecent raillery. Hearing it obſerved, that a certain conſtellation was to riſe next day—

day—*Yes*, ſaid he, *and by order of Cæſar*. It was a great diſcredit to this able orator that he ſacrificed every thing to a witticiſm. Can the truly wiſe man ever allow himſelf to be guilty of an act of injuſtice?

Cæſar made perpetual dictator after the battle of Munda.

The two ſons of Pompey having ſtirred up their friends in Spain to take arms, Cæſar haſtened to that quarter, and by a victory which he gained at Munda, gave liberty a mortal blow. He entered Rome in triumph, as if he had defeated the enemies of the republic; and, being named perpetual dictator and emperour, endeavoured more than ever to gain the hearts of the people. He even diſmiſſed his guards; he cauſed the ſtatues of Pompey to be replaced; and, to increaſe rewards, added a number of new offices; he heaped favours upon many of his mortal enemies, and filled the ſenate with his own creatures; but he greatly debaſed its dignity, by introducing ſix hundred ſenators, moſt of them unworthy of that rank, whom he employed as inſtruments of his ambition. We ſhall ſoon ſee the military title of *Emperour*, which had been formerly conferred by the ſoldiers as merely honorary, very ſoon become a title of ſovereignty.

709. He provokes the republicans.

Some zealous republicans deteſted the thought of a power deſtructive to the ancient government; and the dictator exaſperated them either by his pride or indiſcretion. One day when the ſenate came in a body to decree new honours to him, he did not condeſcend to riſe from his tribunal, and even the populace were offended with this inſtance of contempt. Some time after, when Mark Anthony, his colleague in the conſulſhip, publicly made him an offer of a diadem, the populace applauded his having refuſed it; but his real purpoſe was to ſound the diſpoſitions of the people, and it was not long before it was known that he wiſhed for the title of king, ſo hateful to the Romans. A word ſometimes may have very conſiderable influence on the minds of men; but while Cæſar enjoyed ſupreme and abſolute authority, what occaſion had he for a title which could only ſerve to alarm the minds of the people?

Conſpiracy of Caſſius and Brutus.

A conſpiracy, headed by Caſſius, was immediately formed. Among a number whom he engaged to join him was Marcus Brutus, a deſcendant of the firſt conſul, the ſon in law and imitator of Cato; whom Cæſar loved with the affection of a father, having not only ſpared his life, but loaded him with favours, and admitted him into his friendſhip, without being able to overcome his deteſtation of an uſurped power. Some anonymous billets which Brutus, at that time pretor, found upon his tribunal, rouſed the republican ſentiments in his mind. There was written upon them—*Brutus, thou ſleepeſt; thou art no longer the ſame.* Being ſtaggered by theſe indirect methods, Caſſius at laſt entirely brought him over by his diſcourſe.

Portia's courage.

Portia, the illuſtrious daughter of Cato, and wife of Brutus, obſerving that he was exceedingly agitated, and concealed from her ſome affair of conſequence, made a deep wound in her thigh on purpoſe to try her fortitude in reſiſting pain. Being ſatisfied that even torments could not wring a ſecret from her, ſhe diſcovered the wound to Brutus, and, acquainting him with the deſign ſhe had in executing this hardy deed, obtained the confidence ſhe ſo much deſired.—*Grant me, O heaven,* cried Brutus, *that I may prove myſelf a huſband worthy of Portia!* The very ſoul of Cato, whom philoſophy raiſed ſuperiour to all the men of his time, animated his daughter.

Cæſar aſſaſſinated.

The ſcheme was laid to aſſaſſinate the dictator in full ſenate, when he was on the point of carrying the war into Aſia, to revenge the defeat of Craſſus by the Parthians. Some ſuſpicions and forebodings, rather than the pretended oracles which have been mentioned by every hiſtorian, made him heſitate about going to the meeting of the ſenate; but imagining, as his flatterers told him, that his preſervation was of conſequence to the ſtate, and that no attempt durſt be made againſt his life, he expoſed himſelf without taking any ſteps for the ſecurity of his perſon. The conſpirators, ſurrounding him, ſtabbed him with their daggers; when, at ſight of

Brutus,

Brutus, he cried out—*And thou too, Brutus!* after which, without attempting any longer to defend himſelf, he covered his face with his robe, and at the age of fifty five this great hero met his death like a man who needed not to regret the loſs of life.

Reflections upon this murder.

According to the laws and maxims of the Roman republic, whoever attempted to uſurp a ſovereign authority was held an enemy of his country, and expoſed to ſuffer from the hands of his fellow citizens: Cæſar, therefore, being in poſſeſſion of the whole power, was, in the eye of the law, undoubtedly guilty. An aſſaſſination made up for the want of legal power to puniſh him. But if Rome could have preſerved her liberty no longer, and muſt neceſſarily have ſubmitted to ſome ambitious uſurper, from the manners and principles of the people, which were the great ſupports of liberty, being deſtroyed; if the example of Sylla, and the enormous wealth and credit of ſome individuals, muſt ſooner or later have changed the republic into a monarchy, ought not the ſovereignty of Cæſar to have been preferred before the horrours of new civil wars? The atrocious action of Brutus, who kills his friend and benefactor in the chimerical hope of ſaving the ſtate, is an inſtance of republican fanaticiſm, the exceſſes of which greatly reſemble thoſe of religion.

According to Cicero, all the friends of Cæſar ſhould have been killed.

Cicero, with whoſe timidity the conſpirators were too well acquainted to entruſt him with their ſecret, complained that, after the deed was done, they did not put to death all the intimate friends of Cæſar. In his letter to Atticus he ſaid—*They have executed a childiſh project with the courage of heroes; the tree is felled, but the roots ſtill ſubſiſt.* It was impoſſible at that time to deſtroy the roots of tyranny, for they were connected with the manners of the people, which were incapable of reformation. Perhaps, even among the conſpirators, there might ſoon have been ſeen a new uſurper. We ſhall find Cicero miſtaken in his politics, and become the author and victim of the fortune of Auguſtus.

The conſpirators do not ſucceed with the populace.

Cæſar had no ſooner expired than the murderers ran through the city with their daggers in their hands, exclaiming, that the king of Rome was dead; they were joined by ſome patricians, but the people appeared ſtruck with conſternation and regret; therefore, finding themſelves diſappointed in their expectations, they retired to the capitol. Mark Anthony, who was conſul, and Lepidus, the general of the horſe, diſcovered a readineſs to avenge the death of the dictator, that is to ſay, to ſeize the ſupreme power, which was the object of their ambition. The ſenate aſſembled to conſider whether Cæſar ſhould be declared a tyrant or a lawful magiſtrate; and his memory was on the point of being blaſted, when Anthony artfully obſerved, that as all the offices had been filled up by the dictator, the governours and magiſtrates would be obliged to reſign as ſoon as it ſhould be declared that he from whom their authority flowed was an uſurper and a tyrant, and that a moſt fatal anarchy, diſtreſs, and civil war, would be the conſequence. They left the queſtion undecided, and agreed that the murderers of the dictator ſhould not be proſecuted; yet at the ſame time they confirmed all his laws. Such an equivocal, or rather contradictory decree, paſſed while affairs were in ſuch a critical ſituation, could not be expected to reſtore tranquillity. It was abſolutely neceſſary either to ſhew a reſolute ſpirit, or to renounce liberty altogether. Anthony, by being in poſſeſſion of Cæſar's papers, forged whatever he pleaſed, and employed them for his own purpoſes.

Imprudent conſultation of the ſenate.

Pretended peace.

Mark Anthony ſtirs up the people againſt the murderers of Cæſar.

In the mean time the different parties ſeemed to be willing to conciliate matters; and the conſpirators, having come down from the capitol, were received in a friendly manner by Anthony and Lepidus: but a ſtep taken by the former very ſoon revived the diſſenſions. He cauſed Cæſar's will to be read, in which honourable mention was made of ſome of the murderers, and conſiderable legacies left to the Roman people. The hearts of the people being penetrated with tenderneſs and gratitude, they were completely inflamed by the encomium

which

which he paſſed upon that great man, by the recital of his actions, and by the account which he gave of his virtues. As the body was laid out for performing the funeral obſequies, he took this opportunity to diſplay the robe dyed in blood, and to point out the wounds which had been given by the aſſaſſins. Such was the effect which his harangue made upon the people, that in a tranſport of rage they ran to ſet fire to the houſes of the conſpirators, who immediately quitted Rome. On purpoſe to gain the ſenate, the conſul affected a great deſire to reſtore republican government, and propoſed that Sextus, the ſon of Pompey, who had been concealed in Spain ever ſince the battle of Munda, ſhould be recalled. Even Cicero fell into the ſnare, and highly extolled Anthony, whom we ſhall very ſoon find him tearing in pieces by the moſt violent invectives.

He deceives the ſenate.

CHAP. IX.

Daring Policy of Octavius.—The Triumvirate.—Battle of Philippi, in which the Republican Party was deſtroyed.

OCTAVIUS, ſo celebrated afterwards under the name of Auguſtus, grandſon of Julia the ſiſter of Cæſar, made his appearance at this time, and though but eighteen years of age, took a leading part in public affairs. He had been adopted by the dictator, his great uncle, who left him three fourths of his fortune. He was ſtudying eloquence at Apollonia, a maritime town in Epirus, when he received intelligence of the tragical event which totally changed the face of affairs. He was adviſed to diſſemble, to let time work, and even to renounce his adoption and inheritance; but he had too much ambition to follow ſuch advice; and, going immediately to Rome, declared himſelf the heir of Cæſar. Having obſerved that Anthony, who was ſole maſter, was little diſpoſed to ſhew him any favour, he perſiſted in his purpoſe with a ſteady, artful policy. The dicta-

Octavius, adopted by Cæſar, declares himſelf his heir.

tor's

tor's money being refuſed to him by the conſul, he ſold his patrimony, that he might diſcharge the legacies mentioned in Cæſar's will; an infallible means of attaching the people to his intereſt, and provoking them againſt a man who, by injuring the ſon, muſt appear ungrateful to the memory of the father, and unjuſt to the public.

Open quarrel between Anthony and Octavius.

Anthony and Octavius were frequently reconciled, but ſtill freſh quarrels aroſe: the laſt wanted to revenge the death of Cæſar, while the other only affected to wiſh it, becauſe it would be agreeable to the multitude, but at bottom his ſole purpoſe was to aggrandize himſelf; and their intereſts, being totally oppoſite, at laſt produced a civil war. The hope of their deſtroying one another was matter of much ſatisfaction to many of the ſenators.

Cicero eſpouſes the intereſt of Octavius.

Cicero, leſs prudent than thoſe that remained neuter, eſpouſed the part of Octavius, and inveighed with all the powers of his oratory againſt Anthony, which brought upon him that reproach of Brutus, *that he was leſs anxious for the liberty of his country than to find a good maſter for himſelf.* The perſonal enemy of the one, and ſeduced by the pretended confidence and flattery of the other, he perhaps imagined that he was ſolely employed in ſerving his country, while he was only gratifying his own reſentment and vanity. Sometimes we may ſo far deceive ourſelves as to be ignorant of the motives of our actions, while they are plainly ſeen by the world.

The character of that orator.

The picture of that celebrated orator, as drawn by Monteſquieu, explains the ſecret of his proceedings. "I believe" ſays he, "that if Cato had preſerved his life "for the ſervice of the republic, he would have given a "different turn to affairs. Cicero, with admirable ta"lents for ſhining in a ſubordinate ſphere, was not capa"ble of taking the lead; he had a fine genius, but of"ten wanted elevation of ſoul. With him virtue was "but a ſecondary motive, as glory was with Cato. "Cicero was always the firſt in his own eyes; Cato ne"ver thought of himſelf. The one would have ſaved the

"republic

"republic for its own ſake; the other, that he might "have boaſted of it."

Such a paſſion for vain glory is a proof of a weak mind, which may be led into egregious errours from mean conſiderations. Beſides, Cicero, by extolling the young Cæſar, expected to ſecure a ſupport for himſelf. Though his eloquent Philippics are ſuſpected to have flowed from perſonal reſentment, yet, like thoſe of Demoſthenes, they are excellent models for ſtate orators.

Mean conſiderations lead to great errours.

The government of Ciſalpine Gaul, which Anthony ſecured to himſelf, that he might keep Italy in awe, was the occaſion of the war. Decimus Brutus, one of the chief conſpirators, had been appointed to that government by the dictator, and intended to maintain himſelf in it. Anthony advanced to diſplace him. Octavius was likewiſe at the head of an army, though without a title to the command, but was preſſed by his ſoldiers to aſſume that of propretor; which he refuſed, from an affected modeſty, in hopes of the credit it might procure him with the ſenate; this ſo far ſucceeded, that the ſenate, by the advice of Cicero, not only named him propretor, but likewiſe erected a ſtatue to him, and permitted him to ſtand for the conſulſhip ten years before the time fixed by law. It was not the firſt time that Cicero had ſacrificed the laws to thoſe whoſe friendſhip he courted.

He cauſes honours to be laviſhed upon Octavius.

Anthony had already begun to beſiege Decimus in Modena, but Cicero cauſed him to be declared the enemy of his country if he did not immediately raiſe the ſiege and leave Ciſalpine Gaul. This decree of the ſenate being treated with contempt, the two conſuls, Hirtius and Panſa, in conjunction with Octavius, were ordered to go and attack him. Panſa was defeated, and killed: Hirtius, in gaining a battle, loſt his life. Anthony, being obliged to fly, eſcaped into Tranſalpine Gaul, where Lepidus had the command. Having preſented himſelf in a mourning habit to the ſoldiers, they were affected with compaſſion, and proclaiming him general, Lepidus was obliged to declare in his favour, that he might not be totally forſaken. After

Anthony is defeated, and joins Lepidus.

710. Octavius forms a triumvirate with them.

After the defeat of Anthony, the ſenate no longer ſhewed the ſame complaiſance for Octavius, and gave the command of the army to Decimus. The republican party having recovered courage, Octavius found it was time to pull off the maſk. Cicero, ſtill continuing to be the dupe of his artifice, attempted in vain to procure the conſulſhip for him, in hope of being nominated his colleague; but the propoſal being received with a peal of laughter by the ſenate, the heir of the dictator did not heſitate to copy the bold and artful policy of Cæſar, and, uniting his intereſts with thoſe of Anthony and Lepidus, marched at the head of his army to Rome, where he forced them to chooſe him conſul, though he was ſcarcely twenty years of age; and thus, by his addreſs rather than his courage, put himſelf in a ſituation to gratify that ambition with which he was devoured.

They agree to purſue Cæſar's murderers.

Brutus and Caſſius had withdrawn, the one into Greece, and the other into Aſia, where their party was ſtrengthened by ſucceſs, and they reckoned twenty legions under their command. The firſt ſtep of the young conſul was, to cauſe them to be condemned, with all who where concerned in Cæſar's murder; but as he could not expect to ſubdue them without aſſiſtance, he cauſed the decree which had been paſſed againſt Anthony and Lepidus to be revoked. Octavius joined theſe two in the neighbourhood of Modena, where their conference laſted three days. They agreed to ſhare the ſovereign power among them for five years, under the appellation of triumvirs. Lepidus was to continue in Rome, while Octavius and Anthony carried on the war againſt the conſpirators; but their enemies were to be previouſly extirpated by a proſcription, which would procure them the means of ſupporting their army. Thus all the horrours of the time of Sylla, which had been in ſome degree effaced by the clemency of Cæſar, were again renewed. Cæſar, notwithſtanding his clemency, had been murdered, which was not forgotten by the triumvirs.

They propoſe to extirpate their enemies.

It

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the horrours of this proſcription. The tyrants begun with ſacrificing their friends and kindred to one another. Lepidus preſented the head of his brother, Anthony his uncle's, and Octavius that of Cicero, by whom he had been too zealouſly ſeconded. It was forbidden, under pain of death, to conceal or aſſiſt any proſcribed perſon; a reward was offered to whoever ſhould kill them, and even the freedom of the city to ſlaves who aſſaſſinated their maſters. Some heroic proofs of fidelity in women and ſlaves were to be met with even amidſt this dreadful carnage and the treachery of the times, but villainy made blood to flow in torrents over the whole country. At ſight of Cicero's head, who had been killed by a tribune whom his eloquence had ſaved, Anthony exulted with joy. Three hundred ſenators, and more than two thouſand knights, were murdered. If there was no other cauſe of hatred, the poſſeſſion of riches was a ſufficient offence. Yet, after all, as the confiſcations were inadequate to their wants, they impoſed a tax upon the mothers, daughters and relations of the proſcribed. Here was one of thoſe abominable ſcenes, where men were to be ſeen diveſted of humanity by their paſſions, and ſurpaſſing the fury of tigers. Dreadful proſcription.

Being at laſt glutted with maſſacre and rapine, they haſtened to execute their projects againſt the republicans. Lepidus guarded Rome, while his two colleagues entered Macedonia, where Brutus had been joined by Caſſius. No Roman armies had ever been ſeen of equal number to thoſe that were now to decide the fate of the republic. On each ſide they amounted to more than a hundred thouſand men, ſeaſoned to war, and animated with all the ardour which ambition or a love of liberty could inſpire. Caſſius wanted to avoid coming to an engagement, becauſe the enemy muſt have ſoon periſhed for want of proviſions; but Brutus did not concur in this opinion. The ſoldiers exclaimed, that it was cowardly to decline the combat; they murmured and deſerted, and their impatience determined their generals to engage. Octavius and Anthony march againſt Brutus & Caſſius.

The

711. Battle of Philippi. The battle of Philippi, which was fought on the confines of Macedonia and Thrace, deſtroyed the republican party. Octavius, who was as cowardly in the field as he was bold in council, concealed himſelf on pretence of ſickneſs, and his legions were routed by Brutus; but while the conqueror was too raſhly purſuing the fugitives, Anthony broke and diſperſed the wing of the army commanded by Caſſius, who, being ignorant of the ſucceſs of his colleague, obliged one of his freed men to kill him. Both armies, being in one part victorious, in the other defeated, retreated to their camps. That of the triumvirs was in want of every kind of proviſion, which determined Brutus to purſue the plan of Caſſius; and the ſucceſs would have been infallible, if the mutiny of his troops had not obliged him to hazard a ſecond engagement. After having totally defeated the wing of the army commanded by Octavius, he loſt the battle; and, being perſuaded that liberty was annihilated, fell upon his ſword, and died the ſame death as his colleague.

Death of Caſſius & Brutus.

Faults of theſe two Romans. Theſe two generals were honoured with the title of the laſt of the Romans, but they might have better deſerved it. Caſſius, of a violent, haughty temper, was ſuſpected of being influenced leſs by zeal for his country than hatred againſt Cæſar. Brutus, virtuous from principle, inviolably attached to the laws, juſt and compaſſionate, reſpecting the title of citizen even in his enemies, yielded too much to that enthuſiaſm which impedes reflection. Sometimes, from an apprehenſion of going too great lengths, he did not act with ſufficient vigour; while at others, though but ſeldom, he thought that violence in ſupport of the cauſe in which he was engaged might be permitted. Before the ſecond battle of Philippi, he promiſed his ſoldiers the pillage of Sparta and Theſſalonica, if they gained the victory. This, as Plutarch obſerves, was to imitate thoſe who plead for the right of the ſtrongeſt.

Reflections upon ſui- Brutus and Caſſius, by killing themſelves, at the ſame time deſtroyed the republic, and have therefore been very

very properly cenſured for their raſh deſpair: But ought we to aſcribe ſuicide, which was at that time very frequent in Rome, to a want of courage? "It is cer- "tain," ſays the celebrated Monteſquieu, "that men "are become leſs free, leſs courageous, leſs inclined to "perform noble actions, than they were when by the "power which they aſſumed over themſelves they "could at all times eſcape from every other power." The Chriſtian religion inſpires its followers with a juſt abhorrence of ſuicide; and the inſtances of it which we meet with at preſent are almoſt all the effect of vice and irregularities, that prove how needful are the divine morals it teaches. It is no leſs evident, that it was not from cowardice that the Catos and the Brutuſes rather ſacrificed their lives than ſubmit to loſe their liberty. Subtil reaſonings upon this ſubject can never weaken the proofs drawn from our feelings.

cide, which was at that time very common.

CHAP. X.

Anthony's Miſconduct turned by Octavius to his own Advantage.—Battle of Actium, and End of the Republic.

THE daſtardly Octavius (for tho' he commanded armies, he deſerved no other appellation) continued to glut himſelf with blood after the battle which Anthony had gained for him. A multitude of illuſtrious victims were butchered, and among others Favonius the ſenator, a philoſopher, and the friend of Brutus, but guiltleſs of having dipped his hands in the blood of Cæſar. It was a maxim with him, that the moſt unjuſt tyranny is preferable to a civil war; the truth of which has been too often confirmed by experience.

New cruelties of Octavius.

Execution of Favonius.

As the troops engaged in the ſervice of the tyrants ſolely from motives of intereſt, and the allurement of riches, the triumvirs were obliged to give them a gratuity of five thouſand drachmæ * per man, beſides additional

Profuſion to the ſoldiers.

* 40l. 7s. 3d. ½. ſterling.

tional recompenſes to the officers. We may eaſily judge to what extortions the people were expoſed. Anthony went into Aſia on purpoſe to drain it of the little money which had eſcaped the hands of Brutus and Caſſius. *Since you double our taxes*, ſaid an orator to him, *double likewiſe our ſummers and harveſts, otherwiſe we ſhall not be able to ſatisfy you.* But what avail reaſons againſt force?

Anthony captivated by Cleopatra.

When Anthony arrived in Cilicia, he ſummoned before him Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, whoſe conduct during the war had given room for ſuſpicion. The princeſs appeared, and by her charms captivated that great general and aſpiring politician, who, lulled aſleep in the lap of love, forgot every thing but her. Octavius, who thought of nothing but his own intereſts, and how to get the whole power into his hands, took advantage of Anthony's blind paſſion, and by the moſt ſkilful addreſs made up for his want of military talents.

713. Fall of Lepidus.

His want of merit.

After vanquiſhing, by his generals, Sextus, the ſon of Pompey, who, being maſter of Sicily and Sardinia, had given him no ſmall uneaſineſs, he ſeized the firſt pretence for getting rid of Lepidus, a man entirely deſtitute of merit, whoſe riſe ſeemed to be owing to one of thoſe unaccountable caprices in which fortune ſometimes delights. That triumvir deſcended to the loweſt ſubmiſſion, begged his life, and on that condition was contented to paſs his days in contempt and obſcurity.

His pride and meanneſs.

We may form ſome idea of his meanneſs and pride by the following anecdote. Having taken it into his head to celebrate a triumph for his ſucceſs in a trifling expedition, he himſelf, with the conſent of his colleagues, drew up a proclamation, which began thus—*To all thoſe who ſhall honour our triumph, health and honour; to all others, miſery and proſcription.*

Death of young Pompey.

Anthony, having made young Pompey priſoner in Aſia, and put him to death, was the only man left who could diſpute the empire with his colleague; but, inſtead of this, he paved the way for his rival's uſurpation, and ruined himſelf by a ſeries of the moſt inexcuſable faults.

Fulvia,

Fulvia, widow of the ſeditious Clodius, at that time married to Anthony, had fomented a quarrel between him and Octavius, on purpoſe to force him from the arms of Cleopatra. This was the cauſe of a ſlight war, in which Peruſa was deſtroyed. Both parties being reconciled, and having made a diviſion of all the provinces, Anthony, without any reaſon, quitted Italy, to which he had returned. The Athenians, among whom he deſigned to paſs the winter, received him as if he had been a deity, and offered him their tutelar goddeſs, Minerva, in marriage; a piece of flattery which he rewarded by exacting from them a thouſand talents for her portion. On his return from an unſucceſsful expedition againſt the Parthians, he made himſelf odious and contemptible by new exceſſes; proclaimed Cleopatra queen of Egypt, Cyprus, Africa, and Cœlo Syria; laviſhed provinces and kingdoms on the children he had by her; and by every action brought new diſgrace upon the Roman name.

Anthony makes himſelf odious and contemptible.

Octavius had the addreſs to ſeize every opportunity of leſſening the character of his rival, and at laſt accuſed him before the ſenate. A war was reſolved upon, and Anthony prepared for it in the midſt of pleaſures, ſurrounded by troops of buffoons. By divorcing the virtuous Octavia, his colleague's ſiſter, whom he had married after the death of Fulvia, all hopes of accommodation were cut off, and he was abandoned by numbers of his friends, who were filled with indignation at his conduct and connection with Cleopatra; and ſtill more provoked by the pride and haughtineſs of that queen.

Octavius declares himſelf his enemy.

Before the two rivals had recourſe to arms, they attacked each other with the bittereſt invectives. At laſt the fate of the empire was decided by the ſea fight off Actium. Cleopatra had prevailed upon Anthony to hazard an engagement at ſea, though he was ſuperiour by land, and fled with her gallies in the heat of the battle. Her lover, though a man of tried valour, forgot himſelf on this occaſion, and abandoned every thing to follow

722. Battle of Actium followed by the death of Anthony and Cleopatra.

follow her. Thus Octavius, or rather his general, Agrippa, gained a complete victory; and Anthony's land army, which conſiſted of nineteen legions and twelve thouſand horſe, having in vain waited for the coming of their general, ranged themſelves under the ſtandard of the conqueror. This ſucceſs was ſoon followed by the conqueſt of Egypt; and the enſuing year Anthony laid violent hands upon himſelf at Alexandria. Cleopatra was reſerved by Octavius to adorn his triumph; but ſhe avoided that diſgrace by a courageous death, either from the bite of an aſpick or ſome other poiſon.

724. Octavius by this means ſole maſter of the republic.

Thus did Cæſar's grand nephew, by intrigues and fawning, audaciouſneſs and cruelty, at laſt gain that ſovereignty to which he had aſpired from his youth. In the ſequel, we ſhall ſee by what methods he ſecured his dominion while he affected a reſpect for the ancient laws. Rome had now forever loſt her liberty, and that famous republic was no more; nothing remained but a vain ſhadow, which yet ſoothed the pride of her citizens.

The vices introduced by opulence neceſſarily drew on the ruin of liberty.

This revolution muſt be aſcribed to the vices introduced by opulence. Every thing was ſet to ſale, when every thing could be purchaſed by a few individuals; and their exceſſive riches increaſing the poverty and wretchedneſs of the multitude, the fundamentals of the conſtitution gave way to corruption; integrity diſappeared; ſelf intereſt was the only rule of action; and the depravity of manners infected the ſprings of government. The ſpirit of patriotiſm was ſtifled by a thouſand diſcordant paſſions; luxury, voluptuouſneſs, and debauchery, broke the bonds of duty, and ambition forced every barrier, ſword in hand: in a word, the weak neceſſarily became the ſlaves of the ſtrongeſt. When we ſee the people ſeduced by boundleſs profuſion, the ſoldiers ſold to the general who fills their purſes, the magiſtrates forming cabals to ſupport themſelves in office, and the generals refuſing to lay down the command at the legal period, we may without heſitation conclude, that liberty is at an end.

TENTH

TENTH EPOCHA.

THE EMPERORS.

The REPUBLIC *changed into a* MILITARY MONARCHY.

AUGUSTUS.

CHAP. I.

Reign of Auguſtus till the Death of Agrippa.

HITHERTO we have ſeen Auguſtus (the title which Octavius cauſed the ſenate to confer upon him) acting with the refined policy of an unprincipled man, who ſacrifices every thing to an unbridled appetite for unjuſt dominion; but from this period, if he does not really change his character and maxims, we ſhall no more behold him imbruing his hands in human blood; he will even appear in the light of a good prince, at leaſt ſo far as was neceſſary for his own intereſt. Loaded with encomiums by flatterers, hated by the friends of republican government as an oppreſſor, he will ſometimes merit the applauſe of the judicious politician, by the prudent exerciſe of his authority.

Idea of the reign of Auguſtus.

"Auguſtus," ſays Monteſquieu, "eſtabliſhed order, "i. e. ſervitude, on a durable foundation; for when an "uſurper ſeizes the government of a free ſtate, he calls "every thing order which tends to ſecure the authority "in the hands of a ſingle perſon; and whatever is fa- "vourable to the liberty of the ſubject goes by the "name of confuſion, diſſenſion, and anarchy." But as it was impoſſible the Romans ſhould have continued a free people, the order eſtabliſhed by Auguſtus, when compared with the former confuſion and calamities, in ſome meaſure wipes out the ſpots with which his memory is ſtained. Under his government Rome enjoyed tranquillity,

The eſtabliſhment of order after the loſs of liberty advantageous to the ſtate.

tranquillity, and had time to breathe. Even this was no ſmall advantage, after the horrours of the civil wars.

725. Auguſtus affects an inclination to abdicate.

Having nothing more at heart than the eſtabliſhment of his power, and by a feigned moderation to ſecure himſelf againſt the fate which had hurried Cæſar to the grave, he affected an inclination to abdicate the government, and conſulted on that head his two confidants, Mæcenas and Agrippa; the firſt of whom, like a generous patriot, exhorted him to put ſo noble a deſign in execution; but Agrippa, like an able courtier, argued that ſuch a ſtep would be deſtructive to the public, and dangerous to himſelf; and Auguſtus preferred this opinion, which was, doubtleſs, conformable to his own ſentiments.

Opinions of Mæcenas and Agrippa.

He confirms his power by this feigned moderation.

However, after having repealed all the decrees of the triumvirate, and given ſome proofs of a wiſe adminiſtration, he declared that he reſtored the ſovereign power into the hands of the ſenate and people. He had taken his meaſures with dexterity, and reckoned upon meeting with a refuſal; nor was he miſtaken; he was humbly entreated not to quit the reins of government, and prevailed upon to bear that burden ten years longer, reſerving to himſelf, however, the right of abdication, if his ſervices might be diſpenſed with. In all appearance, the major part of the ſenate penetrated his ſecret intentions, which the tenor of his paſt conduct had ſufficiently diſcovered. But, after all, his power ſeemed to acquire the ſanction of law from the conſent and wiſhes of the people, and he retained it till his death, by a regular renewal of the ſame ceremony. A plan of policy, well concerted and ſteadily purſued, ſeldom fails of ſucceſs, when addreſs is ſeconded by force.

All power centred in his perſon, though the form of the ancient government was retained.

Auguſtus, terrified by the tragical end of Cæſar, and careful to diſguiſe monarchy under the garb of republican government, ſhared the adminiſtration of the provinces with the ſenate, artfully aſſigning to that body ſuch as were leaſt liable to diſturbances; that is, thoſe where no troops were kept on foot; by which means he had the whole military force in his own hands. Far

from

from giving offence to the people by affecting the title of king, he even did not assume that of dictator, contenting himself with the name of emperour, which in the times of the republic was bestowed as a distinction merely honorary, without any power annexed. To this was added, as in the days of Cæsar, the command of the armies, a privilege which retains nations in subjection, and the right of making war and peace. Invested with the consular, proconsular, and tribunitial power, though without the title of tribune; with the censorial, under the name of reformer of manners, and with the high priesthood, to which the influence of religion added great weight, he was absolute master of the state, without suffering his despotic power to become visible. To these titles was added that of father of his country. He left to the senate the ancient offices and ensigns of dignity, but weakened the power of that body even by its numbers, which he increased to a thousand; and by the care he took to admit none but such as were entirely devoted to his pleasure. He caressed and flattered the people, gave them entertainments, and procured them abundance. Their assemblies were held as usual for the election of magistrates; but he governed the comitia, disposed of the suffrages, and every thing was determined according to his will.

Title of emperour.

The senate and people suffered to retain the appearance of liberty.

Such was the government of the emperours. They always exercised the power, while the people and senate retained the appearance, of sovereignty. An empty parade of liberty, which was now no more! Of what importance is it to preserve some traces of freedom in the form of government, when a state is actually under the yoke of a despot?—or to seem to grant voluntarily what cannot be refused? A dispensation from the laws was granted to the emperour. Not to mention that such a privilege demonstrates the utter destruction of all legal authority, what could have hindered him from assuming it without a grant? It is amazing what power words have over mankind. He reigned, because he did not openly pretend to regal authority; though the govern-

But in fact it is annihilated.

Dispensation from the laws.

ment was monarchical, the people fondly imagined that the republic ſtill ſubſiſted, becauſe the names of ſenate, conſul, &c. were ſuffered to remain. In like manner we ſee that frequently the beſt method of deſtroying the influence of an opinion is to preſerve the words, and ſuffer the idea to be loſt.

Auguſtus politically affects an appearance of virtue, to make his crimes be forgotten.

This emperour's conduct in private life, his ſhew of modeſty, his affability and beneficence, were, doubtleſs, attended with the greateſt advantages. That verſatile ſoul could put on every ſhape. By perfidy and cruelty he had laid the foundations of his fortune; and it was neceſſary to wipe out the remembrance of them by putting on the maſk of virtue. He even expreſſed a veneration for the character of Brutus. Once hearing Cato cenſured for his inflexible obſtinacy, he replied—*Whoever ſupports the eſtabliſhed government is a good citizen and a man of honour.* This apology of Cato increaſed his own popularity. The hiſtorian Titus Livius beſtowed the higheſt praiſes on Pompey, without loſing the friendſhip of Auguſtus, who often rallied him as being a partiſan of that hero, but avoided every appearance of cenſuring encomiums conformable to republican ſentiments.

His peaceable reign furniſhes few events.

This long reign furniſhes but few events worthy of notice, as the empire enjoyed tranquillity; and, beſides, we have no good hiſtorians of thoſe times extant (for Suetonius and Dion Caſſius are unworthy of that title.) The defeat of the Cantabrians and Aſturians put a final end to all diſturbances in Spain. Candacé, queen of Ethiopia, who had invaded Egypt, was defeated, and though ſhe afterwards retrieved her loſſes, concluded a peace. The Roman valour, whetted by the civil wars, would have triumphed over more formidable enemies, had the emperour been of a martial diſpoſition; but it was of more importance for him to keep a watchful eye over Rome, and lull its inhabitants aſleep in the ſoft lap of peace.

732. He mar-

His nephew, Marcellus, to whom he had given his daughter in marriage, and deſtined the ſucceſſion of the empire,

empire, a prince of great hopes, was cut off in the flower of his youth, to the unſpeakable regret of the Romans. Agrippa was at a diſtance from court, having been appointed governour of Syria, in order to remove him from Rome, where his preſence had given Marcellus no little uneaſineſs. Auguſtus finding his aſſiſtance neceſſary to put a ſtop to the conſpiracies that were then forming, he was recalled, and married to Julia, the widow of Marcellus. If we may credit the hiſtorians, the emperour was determined to this ſtep by Mæcenas, who frankly told him, *You have raiſed Agrippa ſo high, that you muſt either put him to death or make him your ſon in law*; and Agrippa, without difficulty, conſented to divorce the niece, that he might eſpouſe the daughter, of Auguſtus.

He marries his daughter to Agrippa.

The emperour, having put into his hands the government of Rome, ſet out to viſit the provinces of Aſia, where he had the honour of recovering, without a war, the ſtandards which had belonged to the legions of Craſſus. Phraates, king of Parthia, dreading the power of the empire, ſent back thoſe monuments of a ſhameful defeat, and reſtored the ſurviving priſoners who had been taken when Anthony was routed; an event which was celebrated as a glorious triumph. The whole power of the Roman empire, veſted in a ſingle man, might then very juſtly make its ſtouteſt enemies tremble; but even in its greatneſs were concealed the ſeeds of inevitable ruin.

He viſits Aſia; the king of Parthia reſtores the ſtandards taken from the Romans.

Auguſtus, at his return, received new marks of ſubmiſſion from the ſenate and people. He refuſed the conſulſhip, which he had already borne eleven times; and, inſtead of a vain title, was inveſted with the conſular power during life, with the precedence of thoſe who were nominally appointed to that dignity. The ſenators even carried their meanneſs ſo far as to offer to ſwear that they would obſerve every law which he ſhould enact; but this abject oath was rejected. *If the laws are good*, ſaid he, *they will certainly be obſerved*; *if they are bad, ſuch an obligation will only be productive of miſchief.*

Servility of the ſenate at his return.

chief. He was ſenſible that the legiſlative authority, when united with the military power, was ſufficient to effect every purpoſe.

Laws for the ſuppreſſion of vice ill obſerved through his fault.

However, divers laws, which he enacted about that time, againſt celibacy, adultery, divorce without ſufficient cauſe, and the luxury of the table, raiſed murmurs among the people, and produced few good effects, either becauſe he did not enforce the execution of them with ſufficient vigour, or the univerſal depravation of manners ſerved as a pretext to treat them with neglect.

He corrupts the people.

But what laws can ſtem the torrent of vice? By gratifying the taſte of the people, who now were fully ſatisfied with bread, and public ſhews; by continually entertaining them with games, and making diſtributions of corn, Auguſtus ſhewed himſelf much leſs zealous for correcting the manners of his ſubjects than ſecuring his perſonal intereſt; indeed, theſe were the moſt proper methods to deſtroy all remembrance of the ancient liberty, and prevent the preſent ſtate of ſervitude from being felt.

The attention of of the people diverted from the affairs of government by two actors, Pylades and Bathyllus.

The whole attention of that people, who had formerly ſhewn ſuch ardour for managing affairs of ſtate, was now turned upon Pylades and Bathyllus, two celebrated actors. The former had been ordered to quit the city for his inſolence; and being recalled in order to gratify the Romans, who deeply regretted his abſence, he ſaid to the emperour, *Think yourſelf happy, O Cæſar, that the people turn their thoughts ſolely upon Bathyllus and me.* The expreſſion was ſignificant, and muſt have been fully underſtood by ſo profound a politician.

Reformation of the ſenate followed by cabals.

It affords matter for ſurpriſe that Auguſtus, after having taken ſo many ſteps to debaſe the ſenate, ſhould have attempted to reſtore it to its primitive luſtre. The ſole method for effecting this was a diminution of its numbers, and the excluſion of all whoſe birth or conduct made them unworthy of that rank. Accordingly, the number of ſenators was reduced from a thouſand to ſix hundred, and the ſelection was made with a conſiderable degree of moderation and equity. But as the leaſt

leaſt deſerving are commonly the moſt jealous of honours, this reformation gave birth to cabals. The emperour ſo much dreaded an aſſaſſination, that he never appeared in public without a coat of mail under his robe; and, not content with this, provided himſelf a farther ſecurity, by aſſociating in the tribunitial power, and naming for his ſucceſſor, Agrippa, who was the object of univerſal eſteem for his heroic qualities. However, as he ſtill gave marks of apprehenſion, the ſenators propoſed to watch him in their turns; but Labeo, an eminent lawyer, of republican principles, broke off their deliberations, by ſaying pleaſantly, *I am apt to fall aſleep, do not reckon upon me.* Some malecontents were puniſhed with death. It is not known whether they were guilty, or executed only on ſuſpicion. One thing certain is, that the emperour was no rigid obſerver of juſtice.

Precautions of Auguſtus for his own ſafety.

Bold ſaying of Labeo.

Malecontents capitally puniſhed.

A military government, where the ſword ſupplies the place of fundamental laws, was the more obnoxious to conſpiracies and inſurrections, as, notwithſtanding the corruption of the Roman manners, their martial diſpoſition had ſtill been kept up by the civil wars, and the ſentiments of liberty yet ſurvived in ſome generous minds. If Auguſtus eſcaped all dangers, it was no leſs owing to his addreſs than to his power. We ſhall ſee how fatal deſpotiſm was to the generality of his ſucceſſors.

Dangers of a military government.

CHAP. II.

Wars in Germany.—End of the reign of Auguſtus.—Laws and Literature.

THE empire ſuffered an irreparable loſs in the death of Aprippa, which happened ſoon after his return from an expedition into Pannonia; Caius and Lucius, his two ſons by Julia, had been already adopted by Auguſtus, but their extreme youth made them incapable of aſſiſting him in the government; he was therefore obliged, though againſt his will, to caſt his eyes on

742. Death of Agrippa.

on Tiberius, ſon of his wife Livia and Tiberius Nero. Deſirous of placing him near the throne, he obliged him to divorce a wife whom he loved, and marry Julia, whoſe gallantries were become public. Ambition extinguiſhed every ſentiment of honour in the breaſt of Tiberius, he therefore obeyed with an air of ſatisfaction.

Tiberius made ſon in law of Auguſtus.

War in Germany.

The empire was diſturbed by the Germans, a free and warlike people, and even virtuous, as far as virtue can be practiſed by barbarians. From the time of the irruption of the Cimbri, they had formed a deſign to paſs the Rhine, and procure ſettlements in a milder climate.

This country, whoſe ſoil has been fertilized, and even its climate changed, by dint of induſtry, was then covered with uninhabitable foreſts. Auguſtus paſſed three years in Gaul to guard that province, where he left Druſus, the younger brother of Tiberius. That general entered Germany by the ſea coaſt, and after four glorious campaigns was ſtopped in the career of victory by an untimely death, at the age of thirty-one. He was an able commander and a real friend to his country. Tiberius, who had lately ſignalized himſelf againſt the Pannonians, Daci, and Dalmatians, was ſent into Germany, and drove back the barbarians. The Roman dominion ſeemed to gather permanent ſtrength, and extend itielf into the heart of the country; but the unconquerable Germans only waited a proper opportunity for renewing the war.

Druſus dies in Germany.

Succeſſes of Tiberius in that country.

Auguſtus refuſes a triumph.

For theſe ſucceſſes a triumph was decreed to Auguſtus, to whom alone as captain-general of the armies belonged an honour which had raiſed the emulation of ſo many commanders; however, he refuſed it; one part of his politics being to avoid every appearance of ſtate, as he was ſenſible, that the more he concealed his abſolute authority, the more firmly he ſecured it. At this time the temple of Janus was ſhut, an event which had happened only twice before ſince the building of Rome. The empire enjoyed a twelve years peace; which, to the ſhame of human nature, is an uncommon circumſtance.

The temple of Janus ſhut.

Among

Among the new regulations made by Auguſtus, there is one which marks his ſuſpicious temper. There was a law which prohibited putting ſlaves to the torture in order to procure from them evidence againſt their maſters; this the emperour dared not aboliſh, and at the ſame time dreading that it might affect his own ſafety, he eluded it by an odious evaſion; publiſhing an ordinance, that in caſes of treaſon the ſlaves of the perſon accuſed might be ſold to the prince or to the ſtate, and then their evidence ſhould be valid. This was evidently affronting legiſlation by the legiſlative power itſelf, and ſhewing that every thing was to be regulated by the intereſts of a ſingle perſon.

Unpopular regulation of Auguſtus to make the evidence of ſlaves valid againſt their maſters.

Dion Caſſius gives a ſtriking inſtance of that ſelfiſh policy by which the emperour was uniformly guided. Licinius, his freedman, and one of thoſe who enjoyed his confidence, an artful and unfeeling financier, oppreſſed Gaul by his extortions. As the taxes were paid every month, and the names of Quintilis and Sextilis had lately been changed to July and Auguſt, he reckoned them as four, by their old and new names, and thus doubled the impoſts. Bitter complaints were made to the emperour, and he was on the point of being puniſhed; but diſplaying his coffers—'*Tis for you*, cried he, *that I have amaſſed this treaſure*; *the Gauls might have employed their riches againſt you*; *accept the money*. Upon this the extortioner appeared a man of honour. Several of Auguſtus's actions wear an impoſing air of virtue; but the more we examine his character, the more hypocritical it appears.

An extortioner approved by the emperour.

Tho' he was principally indebted to Mæcenas for the high reputation he enjoyed, he debauched the wife of that friend and faithful miniſter, which occaſioned a coolneſs between them. Mæcenas was an epicurean, of an indolent temper, an able politician, and had ſometimes reſolution enough to tell his maſter diſagreeable truths. One day when Auguſtus was on the point of indulging his ſanguinary temper by the condemnation of ſome perſons who had been brought before him, that miniſter,

Death of Mæcenas.

His moderate counſels.

miniſter, not being able to come near him in the crowd, wrote on a billet, *Butcher, come down from the tribunal*; on reading which, the emperour quitted the court without paſſing ſentence. It was probably owing to his advice, that the emperour acted with ſo much moderation after the ruin of the triumvirate; and the favours he laviſhed upon men of letters produced the encomiums they beſtowed upon his maſter, who was ſincerely grieved for a loſs ſo difficult to be retrieved.

Auguſtus unhappy in his family.

At the height of fortune and power, in the midſt of thoſe divine honours which were ſervilely paid him, Auguſtus at laſt found that it was poſſible to be miſerable. His own family proved an inexhauſtible ſource of mortification. His daughter Julia, to whoſe exceſſes no perſon was a ſtranger except her father, at laſt proſtituted herſelf ſo openly, that he thought it neceſſary to inform the ſenate of her behaviour, and condemn her to baniſhment. His grand daughter of the ſame name imitated her mother, and was ſubjected to the like puniſhment. Caius and Julius, his adopted ſons, the objects of his affection and his hopes, whoſe education he inſpected himſelf, did not anſwer his care; and both died at a diſtance from him, the one in Aſia and the other at Marſeilles.

Rerreat of Tiberius.

His ſon in law Tiberius had retired to Rhodes, perhaps from diſguſt at his predilection in their favour, or reſentment for the infamous conduct of Julia, and ſtayed there ſeven years in a kind of baniſhment. Though Auguſtus was too well acquainted with his diſpoſition to entertain the leaſt friendſhip for him, yet the death of the Cæſars made his adoption neceſſary, and he was named to the ſucceſſion by the emperour, who deteſted him. What numerous afflictions under the appearance of conſummate happineſs!

His adoption.

Cinna's conſpiracy.

The conſpiracy formed againſt him by Cinna, grandſon of Pompey, was a new ſtroke which pierced him to the ſoul. When he received the firſt information of it, he continued ſeveral days in a ſtate of ſuſpenſe between the deſire of revenge and the fear of making himſelf odious

dious by new ſeverities. At laſt the prudent advice of Livia inclined him to the merciful ſide; he therefore ſent for Cinna, and after a ſevere reprimand for his treachery, named him to the conſulſhip; by which ſtep the conſpirator was converted into a zealous friend. Whether this was the effect of clemency or politics is of no importance; it was an action worthy of being celebrated by a Corneille.

The Germans and other barbarous nations having renewed the war, the ſoldiers, who now fought only from motives of intereſt, murmured at the hardſhips of the ſervice in order to increaſe their emoluments. The diſtribution of lands among the veterans, which had been very common ever ſince the days of Sylla, had been wiſely ſuppreſſed as deſtructive of the public tranquillity, and they had received a certain ſum of money as a gratification. This Auguſtus promiſed to increaſe to twenty thouſand ſeſterces a man, after ſixteen years ſervice in the pretorian bands, and twelve thouſand to each legionary ſoldier who had ſerved twenty years. The great ſeſterce, or thouſand ſeſterces, was worth about 8*l.* 1*s.* 5½*d.* Engliſh, conſequently every ſoldier in the pretorian bands received about 161*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.*

The ſoldiers murmur in order to increaſe their emoluments.

The pretorian bands, conſiſting of ten cohorts, of a thouſand each, were the emperour's guards; beſides which there were twenty three or twenty five legions* kept conſtantly on foot, without reckoning nearly an equal number of auxiliaries and the two fleets. The pay of the Roman ſoldiers was conſiderably higher than ours, and therefore the expenſe muſt have been prodigious; but in order to ſupport an uſurped power, every thing muſt be ſacrificed to the military. Auguſtus inſtituted a fund for the pay and recompenſes beſtowed on the ſoldiers, and was the firſt to contribute, as if the whole public money had not been at his diſpoſal; at laſt he impoſed a tax for its maintenance; and the people found themſelves obliged to pay thoſe who kept them in ſlavery.

Prodigious expenſes for the troops.

Fund raiſed, & taxes impoſed for their ſupport.

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* In the time of Polybius, the legion ordinarily conſiſted of 4200 foot, and three hundred horſe; it was afterwards augmented to 5000 and 6000 men.

We ſhall here obſerve, that the Chriſtian vulgar era begins in the year of Rome 753, which, according to the ancient opinion, was the epocha of the birth of Chriſt. The modern chronologiſts place it four years earlier, but, notwithſtanding, conform to the vulgar era, by which we ſhall in the ſequel regulate our dates. This is no place to ſpeak of the Chriſtian religion, which continued long in obſcurity before it enlightened the nations.

Revolt of the barbarous nations, cauſed by oppreſſion.

Tiberius, with his nephew Germanicus, ſon of the celebrated Druſus, ſubdued the Pannonians and Dalmatians, who by their revolt had filled Rome with apprehenſions. One of their chiefs, named Bato, being interrogated by Tiberius on the motives that induced them to rebel, boldly replied—*Becauſe, inſtead of ſhepherds to protect, you ſent wolves to devour us.*

Year of CHRIST 9. Varus defeated by the Germans.

During the rejoicings occaſioned by this victory, they received the diſmal news of Varus being ſurpriſed by the Germans. He commanded the armies in Germany, where his careleſs ſecurity was equalled only by his avarice. Arminius, a native of that country, who, though promoted to the rank of a Roman knight, ſtill continued a zealous patriot, had excited them to arms, and led them on to the battle. In this engagement three legions were cut in pieces, and the general killed himſelf in deſpair. Upon the firſt news of the diſaſter, Auguſtus abandoned himſelf to the moſt puſillanimous ſorrow, and acted in a manner capable of filling the minds of the people with conſternation, whoſe ſpirits it is of the laſt importance to keep up. It is ſaid that he ſtruck his head againſt the walls, exclaiming, *Varus, reſtore my legions.*

Tiberius gains great honour in Germauy.

When recovered from his fright, he ſent Tiberius againſt the enemy, and in two campaigns the appearance of tranquillity was reſtored. That general gained no little honour by his vigilance, his care to keep up an exact diſcipline, and a conduct as remarkable for its prudence as that of his predeceſſor had been for its blindneſs. Though he performed no ſhining exploit,

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he doubtleſs fully anſwered the views of Auguſtus, being at his return admitted to a ſhare of the imperial dignity. Eight legions were ſtationed to guard the Rhine under the command of Germanicus, whom we ſhall have occaſion to mention in the ſequel, and whoſe uncommon merit will make his death regretted by the reader.

He is admitted to a ſhare of the imperial dignity.

The activity of the emperour's genius, as well as his paſſion for command, continued unabated by old age; he never failed to cauſe his power to be continued when its ſtated period drew near, and affected to hold of the republic an authority deſtructive of its very eſſence. He cauſed a law to be paſſed, making the ordinances of his privy council equally binding with the decrees of the ſenate; and one year filled all the offices with perſons of his own nomination, under pretence of riots having been committed at the elections. In a word, every thing depended upon him. The law which made the writing of defamatory libels high treaſon, proves that his ſeverity increaſed with his old age; and it became an inſtrument of tyranny in the hands of his ſucceſſors.

Deſpotiſm of Auguſtus.

Law againſt the authors of libels.

The law promulgated by him againſt celibacy was ſo ill obſerved, that the generality of the knights lived in that ſtate in order to indulge their debauchery; and loudly murmured at the yoke which the government attempted to impoſe upon them. Then appeared a new law, called the *Lex Papia Poppæa*, from the names of the conſuls, inflicting ſeverer penalties than the former. By it all who lived in celibacy were declared incapable of inheriting from their collaterals, and wills in their favour annulled, theſe ſucceſſions and bequeſts being confiſcated to the public treaſury. It is remarkable that both the conſuls, under whoſe adminiſtration it was paſſed, were obnoxious to theſe penalties.

Law againſt celibacy ill obſerved.

It is no difficult matter to obſerve, that the univerſal corruption of manners defeated the views of the legiſlator. The ſacred ties of marriage, ſo pleaſing and ſo eſtimable in the eyes of virtue, are regarded by vice as galling

Corruption threw too many obſtacles in its way

galling fetters. In vain are laws made when the manners of the age render them almoſt of no effect.

Men of rank debaſed themſelves by combats with the gladiators.

Auguſtus had forbidden the knights to combat in the Arena with the gladiators; for that diſgraceful madneſs had infected men of the higheſt rank. But he found ſo many obſtacles raiſed againſt a prohibition, the neceſſity of which appears to us incredible, that he was obliged to take it off. After which, ſenators, and even women, diſhonoured themſelves by engaging in combats as diſgraceful as barbarous and deteſtable; but the Roman manners always preſent us with ſomething ſhocking to humanity.

14. Death of Auguſtus. His reign deſerves commendation.

After a reign of about forty four years, Auguſtus ended his life, at the age of ſeventy ſix, with more courage than he had ever ſhewn in an engagement. Perceiving himſelf near his end, he turned to his confidants and ſaid, Have I not acted my part well? the play is at an end; give me your applauſe. In fact, he has been equalled by few actors in the great theatre of ambition and politics. It was principally by his talent for deceiving mankind, that he roſe to his unrivalled height of power. But, while we deteſt his hypocriſy, and the atrocious actions which render his triumvirate an object of execration, it muſt be acknowledged, that Rome, being under a neceſſity of ſubmitting to a maſter, was happy in being governed by him, rather than another. He extinguiſhed the flame of civil wars, reſtored plenty with peace, revived agriculture, enacted ſalutary laws againſt diſorders of every kind, and, in a word, governed more like a wiſe king than a tyrant.

His maxim with regard to war.

One of his maxims was, that a war ought never to be undertaken, nor a battle ventured, without a great deal to hope, and little to fear. He compared the contrary conduct to fiſhing with golden hooks; the loſs of one of which might ruin the fiſherman. The flattering encomiums he received from orators and poets only prove that he encouraged learning, and rewarded genius.

He gained the praiſe of men of letters.

The Virgils and Horaces, loaded with his favours, laviſhed upon him the incenſe, ought I to ſay of gratitude,

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or adulation? To them he is principally indebted for his fame; and it was unqueſtionably good policy to favour men ſo capable of charming their cotemporaries, and gaining the ſuffrages of all ages.

Taſte formed before his time.

We ſhould be groſsly miſtaken did we give Auguſtus the honour of introducing that good taſte which then univerſally prevailed. Lucretius, Cicero, Salluſt, Cæſar, &c. flouriſhed before him. The career was open. The Romans had been taught by the Greeks to imitate and embelliſh nature; taſte was formed, and the light of knowledge diffuſed. Comedy, Eloquence, Hiſtory, and Philoſophy, had produced their maſter pieces; nothing more was wanting than to diſpute the palm with Homer and Pindar, which was done with ſucceſs by the two poets, friends of Auguſtus and Mæcenas. Ovid, notwithſtanding his faulty indulgence in brilliant thoughts, holds a diſtinguiſhed rank among the authors of that age; but his ill conduct brought him into diſgrace, and he died in exile.

TIBERIUS.

CHAP. I.

From the Acceſſion of Tiberius till the Death of Germanicus and Piſo.

14. Tiberius aſcends the throne.

IT was ſaid that Auguſtus made choice of Tiberius for his ſucceſſor, that he might increaſe his own glory by the contraſt. But this ſuſpicion is not ſupported by the leaſt degree of probability, and ſeems to be the offſpring of human malignity, which delights to paint in odious colours the intentions as well as the vices of the great. However, the government of Tiberius was in fact a deteſtable tyranny, and well calculated for giving new luſtre to the memory of Auguſtus.

His character.

This prince, who was deſcended from the ancient family of the Claudii, and about the age of fifty five, to a great

great genius, capacity, and experience, joined all the vices of a gloomy, ſuſpicious, cruel and treacherous ſoul. He concealed his thoughts under the maſk of an impenetrable diſſimulation, which only ſerved to render them more dangerous; and the firſt ſteps he took ſhewed him to be a tyrant equally void of honour and humanity. Auguſtus had adopted one of Agrippa's ſons, whom he afterwards baniſhed, becauſe he found his diſpoſition incorrigibly and ferociouſly vicious. Young Agrippa was ſtill alive in his place of exile, where Tiberius, whoſe jealouſy could not bear the moſt diſtant apprehenſion of a rival, cauſed him to be aſſaſſinated, and then threatened the murderer who had executed his orders with a criminal proſecution. Thus we ſee him in his firſt actions giving a looſe to his villainy, and concealing it under the veil of hypocriſy.

Cauſes young Agrippa to be aſſaſſinated.

After this beginning, though he already acted as ſovereign, and had taken upon him the command of the army, he affected in the ſenate to refuſe the acceptance of a power which he was actually exerciſing as the heir of Auguſtus; exaggerated the uneaſineſs with which it was attended; repreſented that it was too heavy a burthen for one man, and therefore ought to be divided among many; and that certainly among ſo many illuſtrious perſonages ſome might be found capable of ſupporting its weight. The ſenators pretended ignorance of his real thoughts, proſtrated themſelves at his feet, and conjured him not to abandon the republic; he at laſt ſeemed to yield, though with reluctance, to the entreaties of the ſenate, and conſented to accept of the empire till it ſhould be thought proper to relieve his old age from the cares of government.

Obliges the ſenate to entreat him to accept the ſovereignty.

By this ridiculous farce, Tiberius doubtleſs intended to impoſe upon the people, and artfully to ſound the thoughts of the ſenators; and ſome of them, who either through indignation or impatience had expreſſed themſelves with freedom, ſoon felt the weight of his reſentment; but by far the greater part had ſtudied their looks and geſtures ſo carefully as to eſcape ſuſpicion; and ſhew-

He wanted to ſound the ſentiments of the ſenators.

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ed themſelves well qualified for being ſlaves to a ſuſpicious and unfeeling tyrant. Through an affectation of modeſty, though in fact from a fear of his own grandeur ſuffering any diminution, he oppoſed the exceſſive honours propoſed to be conferred on his mother Livia, the widow of Auguſtus, and to whoſe credit, during the late reign, he was indebted for his firſt riſe. He likewiſe rejected the titles of *Lord* and *Maſter*, which were offered him in quality of emperour. *I am maſter of my ſlaves*, ſaid he, *I am general of my ſoldiers, and chief of the people.*

His affected modeſty.

His conduct was at firſt conformable to this language. He ſhewed an extraordinary deference for the ſenate, conſulted it on all occaſions, and even extended its power by transferring to it the right of election, which hitherto had, at leaſt in appearance, been exerciſed by the people. He honoured the conſuls, reſpected the laws and manners, cauſed juſtice to be ſtrictly adminiſtered, and lightened the burdens of the provinces, ſaying, that *a good ſhepherd ought to ſhear, not flay his ſheep.* He even bore with patience ſome ſtrokes of calumny and ſatire, becauſe, ſaid he, *in a free ſtate, men's thoughts and tongues ought to be free.* This moderation unqueſtionably flowed from his dread of being ſupplanted by Germanicus, who was ſignalizing himſelf in Germany; but the tyrant threw off the maſk when he thought that he might ſafely give the reins to his paſſions.

He governs at firſt with moderation from a dread of being ſupplanted by Germanicus.

Two ſeditions in the army filled him with uneaſineſs; the firſt happened in Pannonia, where three legions were ſtationed under the command of Blæſus. Theſe troops, being indulged in a few days repoſe, began to reflect on the hardſhips of their condition; and from murmurs proceeded to form cabals. They loudly demanded an augmentation of their pay; that the time of ſervice ſhould be limited to ten years, and their gratuity paid at their diſcharge. Tiberius thought the danger ſo great, that he ſent his own ſon Druſus to the camp. But that young prince, perhaps, would have met with inſuperable obſtacles, had not the ſuperſtition of the ſoldiers

Sedition of the army in Pannonia.

ſoldiers been awakened by an eclipſe of the moon, accompanied by dreadful ſtorms, which terrified them into ſubmiſſion. Some were puniſhed with death, and the reſt returned to their duty.

Another ſedition in Germany.

In Germany the ſame cauſes produced the ſame effects, only with this difference, that the mutiny of a numerous army might have been attended with much worſe conſequences than that of three legions; and its general Germanicus, who was idolized by the ſoldiers, might take advantage of that opportunity to raiſe himſelf to the imperial dignity; he had been adopted, but with reluctance, by Tiberius, who looked with a jealous eye on his merit, his reputation, and the affection borne him by all ranks. But the loyalty of Germanicus was not in the leaſt tainted by theſe conſiderations. His preſence had been required in Gaul for the ſervice of the emperour, and there he received the news of the mutiny among the troops. Their hope was to ſee him ſoon at their head, contending for the throne he ſo well deſerved, againſt its preſent poſſeſſor, whom they regarded only as a tyrant. But with Germanicus a ſenſe of duty outweighed all the allurements of fortune. On the firſt news of the tumult he haſtened to appeaſe it; but the ferment was too ſtrong to be allayed either by his reproaches or entreaties. At laſt he endeavoured to ſtab himſelf in their preſence, but his arm was held by his friends, when one of the mutineers coming up preſented his ſword, crying out—*This is better than your own.* However, notwithſtanding this exceſs of rage, by a prudent mixture of firmneſs and temper, he found means to quell the ſedition. The fury of the ſoldiers gave way to ſober reflection, and after having with their own hands maſſacred their ringleaders, they demanded leave, as an expiation of their crime, to march againſt the enemy, whom they attacked and cut in pieces. The barbarians were ſtruck with ſuch terrour by a great victory gained over Arminius, that Germanicus flattered himſelf with making a complete conqueſt of them in a ſhort time, when Tiberius, who with unceaſing care diſſembled

Germanicus appeaſes the mutiny, inſtead of turning it to his own advantage.

16. He defeats Arminus.

diſſembled the ſuſpicion to which he was every moment a prey, recalled him to Rome under pretence of granting him time to repoſe after the fatigues of war, and advancing him to new honours.

Though the emperour was a perfect maſter of diſſimulation, he inadvertently ſhewed from time to time ſome marks of cruelty, which gave a dreadful proſpect of what was to follow. The legacy which Auguſtus had bequeathed to the people not being immediately paid, a buffoon, ſeeing a funeral proceſſion paſs by, came up to the deceaſed, and bid him acquaint Auguſtus that his will was not executed. Tiberius, being informed of this ſally, ſent for the man, paid him his ſhare of the legacy, and immediately cauſed him to be put to death, ſaying —*Go, tell my father that I am executing his will.* The moderation he had ſhewn with regard to thoſe who cenſured his conduct was not of long continuance. In a ſhort time not only writings but words were made high treaſon, and thus the villainy of informers was furniſhed with arms for the deſtruction of men of worth.

Tiberius begins to ſhew marks of his cruelty.

Crime of high treaſon.

Two perſons being accuſed on the moſt frivolous pretences of ſacrilegiouſly profaning the worſhip of Auguſtus, the emperour very prudently ſtopped the proſecution, obſerving, that the *puniſhment of crimes committed againſt the gods ought to be left to themſelves.* But he ſhewed an incomprehenſible mixture of excellent maxims, and cruelty; inſtances of juſtice, and acts of tyranny. If we were to draw a picture of his life, we might ſay that he knew what was good, and often commanded it; but the general tenour of his conduct was to do evil, with cool, deliberate malevolence.

Accuſation of ſacrilege.

Germanicus, on his return, was honoured with a ſplendid triumph. But the more marks of reſpect and affection he received from the people, the more was the ſecret enmity of the emperour inflamed againſt him; who, in order to remove ſo hateful an object, and work his deſtruction, conferred upon him the command of the army in Aſia, in ſeveral provinces of which troubles had broke out, and the fidelity of the legions was not

Germanicus ſent into Aſia through the malignity of the emperour.

Piſo governour of Syria.

ſuſpected. At the ſame time the government of Syria was conferred upon Piſo, a man of violent and haughty temper, and a fit agent for the commiſſion of the blackeſt crimes.

Earthquake.

Twelve of the principal cities in Aſia were deſtroyed this year by an earthquake. Theſe natural calamities ſeemed preſages of more dreadful evils: at leaſt it may be ſaid, that the firſt only deſtroyed a number of lives in a particular country; but the others, originating from the malignant diſpoſition of the ſovereign and the vices of the ſubjects, neceſſarily inflicted a deep wound in the body of the empire.

Succeſs of Germanicus.

In the Eaſt, Germanicus did every thing that could be expected from a prince of his amiable temper, undaunted reſolution, and ſuperiour genius. He reſtored univerſal tranquillity, gave a king to Armenia, which was torn by civil diſſenſions, reduced Comagena and Cappadocia into Roman provinces, and gained all hearts by the manner in which he executed his commiſſion.

He is thwarted in every thing by Piſo.

But on his arrival in Syria, he found Piſo as haughty and untractable as foreign nations had been ſubmiſſive. That governour thwarted his views, ſlighted his orders, and every moment gave him new reaſon to complain. He even carried his exceſſes to ſuch a length, that Germanicus commanded him to quit the province; ſoon after which, that prince was ſeized with a dangerous diſtemper at Antioch, where he died, with his laſt breath conjuring his friends to revenge his death upon Piſo, by whom he believed that he had been poiſoned.

19. He dies very much regretted.

Piſo accuſed at Rome.

Romans and Aſiatics all joined in ſhewing the moſt frantic marks of deſpair; all acted as if they had loſt their father, their only hope. Piſo endeavoured to repoſſeſs his government, but another having been elected by the prince's lieutenants and the ſenators, he was expelled and obliged to return to Italy, where he waited the arrival of his accuſers. Tiberius was deſirous of parrying this ſtroke: the death of Germanicus, whether natural or violent, certainly filled him with joy in the midſt of the general grief, which he pretended to ſhare.

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As he could not ſtop the courſe of juſtice, he referred the cognizance of the affair to the ſenate; but made them underſtand that he diſapproved the exceſſive heat with which the proſecution was carried on.

His trial and death.

The charge conſiſted of ſeveral articles: the unbridled licentiouſneſs in which he indulged the army in order to form a party; his ill treatment of men of worth, particularly the friends of Germanicus; poiſon and ſorcery employed againſt the life of that prince. Piſo made but a lame defence againſt every article except the laſt, which he clearly refuted. Perceiving that Tiberius gave no tokens of intereſting himſelf in his cauſe, nor ſhewed any ſigns of pity, he left the court in deſpair; and, having written a letter, in which he recommended his children to the emperour, was next morning found dead in his chamber.

Tiberius ſuſpected on that account.

Some believed that Tiberius had cauſed him to be aſſaſſinated, leſt, in his own juſtification, he ſhould produce the ſecret orders he had received againſt Germanicus. Every thing is confined to ſuſpicions and conjectures: "So ambiguous," ſays Tacitus, "are the accounts of important tranſactions, ſome adopting every "common report, while others purpoſely diſguiſe the "truth, and theſe contradictions being handed down "from one generation to another." A maxim principally applicable to court affairs, which are wrapt in myſterious darkneſs, and ſuſceptible of every miſrepreſentation from the ſpirit of party.

CHAP. II.

Government of Tiberius till the Conſpiracy of Sejanus.

The emperour's conduct ſtrikes terrour.

THE emperour's gloomy character, equivocal language, refined diſſimulation, and that ſolitude in which he began to fly from the ſight of mankind, filled all hearts with the horrours of ſuſpenſe, dread, and miſtruſt. The public gave the preference to the diſſipated

and luxurious life of his ſon Druſus, who was then conſul. *Let him paſs his days at the public ſhews*, ſaid they, *and his nights at the table, rather than give himſelf up to cheerleſs ſolitude, gloomy watchfulneſs, and murderous ſuſpicions.*

Enormous abuſe of informations.

The enormous abuſe of informations ſtruck the Romans with conſternation. A word, an innocent piece of mirth, a nothing, was wreſted to an ill meaning, and converted into treaſon. An old pretor narrowly eſcaped an accuſation of this ſort, becauſe, being preſſed by a natural occaſion, he forgot to take off his ring, on which was a head of the emperour. Druſus having been ſeized with a ſevere fit of illneſs, a Roman knight, who thought his end approaching, wrote an elegy in his praiſe, and had the imprudence to read it in a public company; upon which an information was lodged againſt him before the ſenate, and he was condemned and executed.

Criminals forbid to be executed till ten days after ſentence.

Tiberius gave no tokens of diſapproving this infamous ſentence; he only complained that they had not waited his orders, and cauſed a regulation to be made, that an interval of ten days ſhould paſs between the condemnation of a criminal by the ſenate, and his execution; not that he intended to mitigate their ſentence, but that, during his abſence, he might be previouſly informed of all their deciſions.

The Romans receive with pleaſure the news of a revolt in Gaul.

The Romans, groaning under the weight of tyranny, received with pleaſure an account of the revolt of the Gauls, from which they hoped to gain a change of maſters. Unhappily they were deceived in their expectations, and both they and the Gauls were ſtill doomed to oppreſſion. But what are we to think of a government where the ſubjects rejoiced at the news of a revolt?

Tiberius refuſes to make laws againſt luxury from a ſenſe of their inutility.

However, Tiberius, by an artful policy, always avoided what might have increaſed the general odium, without procuring him any advantage. He was often preſſed to check the exceſs of luxury, which had grown to an incredible height, eſpecially in the table. A ſcarce fiſh, of four pounds and a half, was ſold for five thouſand ſeſterces;

ſeſterces*; immenſe ſums were paid for a good cook, or a delicate diſh, and men outvied one another in diſſipating their fortunes by the moſt extravagant caprices.

Though the emperour loved frugality, and ſet an example of it in his own conduct, he would not hazard his authority by a fruitleſs multiplication of ordinances and penalties; being perſuaded, according to Tacitus, that it is better for a prince to wink at vices which are too firmly rooted, than to ſhew that he has not power to reform them. He obſerved, that the laſt ſumptuary laws, from which great benefits were expected, had increaſed, inſtead of checking or extirpating, luxury—*For*, added he, *if men deſire what is yet tolerated, they are in ſome meaſure reſtrained by the dread of a future prohibition; but when that has once been made, and is violated with impunity, they are no longer withheld by fear, ſhame, or any other tie.*

In this, Tiberius judged rightly; for to make laws, which, though wiſe in themſelves, are impoſſible in execution, is introducing the greateſt evil that can befall a ſtate—a contempt of the legiſlative authority. But in a ſtate where an extreme inequality of fortune engenders every vice, how is it poſſible to check the follies of opulence? If you limit the expenſes of the rich, who throw away that gold which they cannot uſe, they will hoard it up, circulation will be ſtopped, and the miſery of the poor increaſed. A much more proper method for the baniſhment of luxury, would be to relieve the poor from taxes, and throw the burden of them on thoſe who are nauſeated with their ſuperfluity. But to execute ſuch a ſcheme would require an uncommon degree of prudence as well as vigour.

He was right in his ſentiments on that head.

Method of baniſhing luxury.

The abuſes of ſuperſtition are ſometimes no leſs dangerous, and always as difficult to be reformed, as thoſe of opulence. Complaints were made of the prodigious number of aſylums in Greece, where fugitive ſlaves, fraudulent debtors, and malefactors of every ſpecies, found a ſecure retreat, to the great damage of the public. *No power*, ſays Tacitus, *was capable of reſtraining the people from*

The grievance of aſylums in Greece kept up, but under certain regulations.

* 40*l.* 7*s.* 3½*d.* Engliſh money.

from ſedition, who made it a religious duty to protect criminals. That affair was debated in the ſenate, where the deputies of ſeveral Greek cities appeared in defence of what they regarded as privileges, though common ſenſe ought to have made them be looked upon as public nuiſances. Whether the ſenate was influenced by prejudice, or afraid of irritating a ſuperſtitious people, the aſylums were kept up, though they were put under ſeveral important regulations.

22. Servility and meanneſs of the ſenate.

The emperour had for ſome time retired into Campania, where he indulged himſelf in the gloom of ſolitude, without loſing any portion of his reſtleſs activity: but his mother being ſeized with a diſtemper, he was obliged to return to Rome, where he found the ſenate more cringing, more mean, than ever: he even gave manifeſt ſigns of diſguſt at their low adulation; and, on his quitting the houſe, is ſaid to have exclaimed, *O ſervile race, who hug your chains!*

Fact of this kind.

Tacitus relates ſome facts highly characteriſtic of thoſe ſlaves of tyranny. An information having been lodged againſt Ennius, a Roman knight, for having cauſed ſome plate to be made of a ſilver ſtatue of the emperour, he threw out ſo abſurd an indictment. Capito, a celebrated lawyer, and ſtill more remarkable for his low adulation, in order to pay his court, complained of this lenity; as if the moderation of the ſovereign had winked at a crime againſt the ſtate.

A father accuſed by his ſon.

Mean while informations, being encouraged by rewards, multiplied every day. An inſtance of this kind appeared, which may be looked upon as a monſter in the moral world; a ſon accuſing his father, who appeared in court loaded with chains, and overwhelmed with ſorrow, while the other pleaded againſt him with an air of gaiety and confidence. The unhappy father was exiled, and ſome of the judges even gave their opinion for putting him to death, becauſe he was hated by Tiberius: For of what are not men capable, when they have no rule of action but their own intereſt and the paſſions of another? They would without remorſe ſacrifice their own fathers.

Cremutius

Cremutius Cordus, an impartial hiſtorian, had beſtowed encomiums upon Brutus, and called Caſſius *the laſt of the Romans*; beſides which he had let fall ſome expreſſions reflecting on the dreadful Sejanus, then at his height of power; it was therefore impoſſible he ſhould eſcape with impunity. An accuſation was brought againſt him, and he ſaw clearly that he was undone; but his courage did not forſake him. *My actions are blameleſs*, ſaid he to the ſenate, *and therefore my words are made uſe of to work my ruin. All hiſtorians have mentioned Brutus and Caſſius with honour. Several ſatirical pieces againſt Auguſtus and Julius Cæſar are ſtill extant. Thoſe great men bore them with patience, and by this conduct perhaps ſhewed as much prudence as moderation; for libels fall into oblivion when they are diſregarded, but the world thinks that the ſatire is juſt when it provokes reſentment. It has in all times been allowed to ſpeak well of the dead, who are no longer objects of favour or hatred. Poſterity will do juſtice to every man, and if I am condemned, will not only remember Brutus and Caſſius, but me.*

Proſecution of Cremutius Cordus for his works.

He then left the ſenate, fully reſolved to deliver himſelf from his perſecutors, by a voluntary death. This was the only method to diſappoint the avarice of the informers, who could not ſeize upon the ſpoils of the accuſed till after condemnation; and notwithſtanding all their endeavours, he put his deſign in execution. His books were ordered by the ſenate to be burnt, but they were ſoon after republiſhed, and bought up with the greateſt avidity. Tacitus, when ſpeaking of Cremutius and his works, obſerves, that ſeverities exerciſed againſt men of genius only increaſe their credit; and that all who treated them with rigour have diſhonoured themſelves, and heightened the reputation of the writers.

His death.

His books ordered to be burnt, but fruitleſsly.

Rome now became unſupportable to the emperour, becauſe it was too public a place for the free indulgence of his vices; and he was equally diſguſted by freedom, of which, however, there ſcarce remained the ſlighteſt traces, and the ſervile adulation which proſtrated itſelf at

26. The emperour quits Rome, & retires to Capræa.

at his feet. Beſides, he could not bear the haughty behaviour of his mother Livia, to whom he was indebted for the empire; a benefit, the remembrance of which was no ſmall mortification to his vanity. At laſt he quitted the city, never to return, taking with him only one ſenator, ſome knights, and a few Greek literati, with whoſe converſation he was amuſed. He gave ſtrict orders that no perſon ſhould come to diſturb his quiet; and not finding in Campania a ſolitude where he could be entirely inacceſſible, he fixed his reſidence in the Iſle of Capræa, which he rendered famous by his cruelties and debaucheries. There removed from the view of mankind, and the cares of buſineſs, he endeavoured to keep up his ſpirits in old age, by the moſt infamous vices.

Accidental calamities.

The fall of an amphitheatre at Fidenæ, by which fifty thouſand perſons were killed or hurt, and a fire at Rome, which conſumed a whole quarter of the city, are but trifling events, ſcarce deſerving a place in hiſtory, when compared with the dreadful miſchiefs produced by a malevolent heart, joined to abſolute power.

CHAP. III.

Conſpiracy of Sejanus.—End of the Reign of Tiberius.

Sejanus, being abſolute miniſter, aſpires to the ſovereign power.

SEJANUS, a miniſter equally inhuman with his maſter, had acquired an incredible influence over that ſuſpicious temper to which every thing gave umbrage. From the rank of plain knight he had mounted by his intrigues to the higheſt pitch of fortune; and this riſe made him extend his views even to the throne. We ſhall give a continued narration of the ſteps taken by his ambitious policy: for it is but of little importance to follow dates, if we obtain a clear idea of the characters of men, and the chain of events.

He forms the pretorian guards in-

Sejanus, having been inveſted with the command of the pretorian guards, thought he might ſecure to himſelf

ſelf a powerful reſource by an office which had hitherto been looked upon as of little importance. With this view, but under pretence of maintaining diſcipline, he formed a camp of all the cohorts which had before been cantoned in the different quarters of Rome, and the neighbouring towns. Thus he, in a manner, had an army at his command, and the more fit for his ſervice, as it was encamped at the gates of the capital.

to an army to ſerve his own deſigns.

Though the imperial family was numerous, he attempted to open a way for himſelf over its ruins. His firſt victim was Druſus, the emperour's ſon, againſt whom he entertained a perſonal hatred: having debauched his wife, he prevailed upon her by a promiſe of marriage, and the proſpect of being empreſs, to give her huſband a ſlow poiſon, which put an end to his life. Two years after, Sejanus ſolicited Tiberius to give him the widow in marriage; but the emperour, though without entertaining the leaſt ſuſpicion of his guilt, gave him a gentle refuſal, or rather repreſented to him the inconveniences that would attend ſo unequal an alliance. Three ſons of Germanicus, who were now the next in ſucceſſion, and their mother, the virtuous Agrippina, a princeſs of haughty ſpirit, and ſuperiour to the weakneſs of her ſex, in their turn felt the effects of the miniſter's villainy. He employed ſecret ſpies to watch their conduct, ſpread inviſible ſnares round them; and, in ſhort, left no means untried to effect their deſtruction. Their being the children of Germanicus was ſufficient to make them objects of the emperour's averſion; he therefore gave eaſy credit to every thing reported to their diſadvantage, and wrote a letter filled with invectives againſt them to the ſenate. Agrippina and her eldeſt ſon were baniſhed as enemies to their country, and her ſecond ſon was confined in priſon.

Crimes committed by him to deſtroy the imperial family.

29. His ſucceſs.

Sejanus now became more maſter of the empire than the emperour himſelf; who, blindly repoſing an entire confidence in that favourite, and ſurrounded by his ſpies, acted only by his direction. The miniſter, having every thing at his diſpoſal, acquired an abſolute and univerſal

Sejanus conſpires againſt the emperour's life.

universal dominion from the motives of hope and fear. No diſtinction was made between him and the emperour, and the ſame honours were indiſcriminately paid to both. Only one ſtep was wanting to put the finiſhing ſtroke to ſuch a complication of crimes, the aſſaſſination of Tiberius, and the uſurpation of the ſupreme power. The deſign was formed, and the ſucceſs would have been infallible, had not the emperour's eyes been opened by private information of this extraordinary conſpiracy.

31. The dexterity ſhewn by Tiberius in getting rid of Sejanus.

His political powers were again rouſed, and did him excellent ſervice on this occaſion. Not daring at firſt to uſe ſeverity, he had recourſe to artifice, loaded Sejanus with careſſes, and cauſed him to be nominated to the conſulſhip, which furniſhed an honourable pretence for removing him to a diſtance. As ſoon as the new conſul arrived in Rome, Tiberius ſounded the minds of the public, and kept them in ſuſpenſe; he ſometimes dropped an expreſſion of diſſatisfaction, which cooled the adoration paid to the favourite; ſometimes beſtowed on him marks of confidence, which prevented his coming to an open rupture. The truth was unveiled by ſlow degrees; the intentions of the deſpot were gueſſed, and the miniſter was deſerted. At laſt Macro arrived, with a commiſſion to take upon him the command of the pretorian guards, and a letter of accuſation againſt Sejanus, which was read in the ſenate. Sejanus was arreſted, almoſt immediately condemned, and executed.

Faithleſsneſs of Sejanus's friends.

A moment before, on a falſe report ſpread by Macro, that Sejanus was aſſociated with the emperour in the tribunitial power, the ſenators had redoubled their flatteries and homage. How low does ſelf intereſt debaſe mankind! They who had thrown themſelves at his feet with the moſt ſervile proſtration, now arrogantly inſulted his diſtreſs. Never was there a ſtronger picture of the knavery and falſehood of court friends, or of the impetuous levity of the people. The body of Sejanus was treated with every mark of ignominy, and his ſtatues broken; his children were condemned to death, without

out ſparing even his infant daughter. Hiſtory furniſhes numerous examples of theſe dreadful reverſes of fortune; but the paſſions are ſeldom corrected by example.

Tiberius gives a looſe to cruelty.

Tiberius had been ſtruck with terrour, and kept himſelf concealed, from the opening of the ſcene till the cataſtrophe freed him from apprehenſion. In vain did the public conceive a flattering hope that the violence of the tyranny would be mitigated, as if it had been principally owing to the miniſter. The emperour, indulging his natural propenſity, exhibited a ſpectacle more horrid than the world had yet beheld. The lives of the people became the ſport of his cruelty. Barely to take them away was not ſufficient, if their death was not tormenting and atrocious. One of theſe unhappy men having killed himſelf, he exclaimed, in a tone of diſcontent, *He has eſcaped me.*

Horrid practices of informers.

The infamous trade of informer grew into ſuch vogue, that even ſenators did not bluſh to exerciſe it. The facts related by Tacitus and Suetonius make human nature recoil. One inſtance will enable us to judge of the reſt. The mother of Fufius, Sejanus's friend, a woman at the extremity of old age, was executed becauſe ſhe ſhed tears for her ſon's death. Theſe judicial murders were committed in conſequence of the ſentences paſſed by the ſenate; and it was the higheſt degree of tyranny to uſe as its inſtrument that tribunal which was formerly ſo venerable. At laſt Tiberius, wearied with the tedious forms of juſtice, ordered a general maſſacre of all who were detained in priſon for the affair of Sejanus. Heaps of carcaſes were piled up in the public places; and though the ſight muſt have filled all hearts with the moſt piercing ſorrow, the leaſt token of grief was unpardonable.

Maſſacre of ſuſpected perſons.

He deliberates on the choice of a ſucceſſor, but comes to no determination.

In the midſt of theſe barbarities, the old emperour ſtill continued his debaucheries, which he ſtrove to hide from the eyes of the public. Being of a healthy conſtitution, he treated the art of phyſic with contempt, and laughed at every man who at the age of thirty could not take the proper methods for ſecuring his own health. However, finding the ſymptoms of a decay of nature, he

he turned his thoughts upon the choice of a ſucceſſor.

Caius Caligula.

Caius (Caligula) the youngeſt ſon of Germanicus was the only perſon ſurviving of that family. He was then twenty four years of age, beloved by the people for the ſake of his father, and acted the part of a fawning, aſſiduous courtier. The emperour, who, through the diſguiſe he put on, ſaw the real perverſity of his character, looked upon him with averſion, and would have preferred Tiberius Gemellus, ſon of Druſus, his own grandſon by blood, which Caius was only by adoption, had it not been for the youth of Gemellus, who was only ſeventeen, and the licentious life of his mother Livilla, which made his legitimacy be queſtioned. Puzzled by theſe difficulties, Tiberius left the deciſion to fate.

37. The emperour aſſaſſinated by Macro.

Caius had attached to his intereſt Macro, the captain of the pretorian guards; who on his ſide was deſirous of ſecuring a ſupport in the favour of the young prince. And Tiberius falling into a ſwoon, and being thought dead, Macro immediately cauſed the perſon whoſe intereſt he had eſpouſed to be proclaimed emperour by the ſoldiers. In the mean time Tiberius having recovered from his ſwoon, while every heart was frozen with terrour, the prefect ordered him to be ſmothered with matraſſes. This emperour ended his life at the age of ſeventy eight, in the twenty third year of his reign; and an object of ſuch univerſal abhorrence, that the populace were on the point of inſulting his remains. Though ſome inſtances of moderation, generoſity, and juſtice, are to be met with in his reign, they have not mitigated the deteſtation in which his memory is juſtly held, becauſe his prevailing character was cruelty and knavery, and with a ſtrong underſtanding he had a bad heart.

Praiſed by Velleius Paterculus.

However, Velleius Paterculus, his cotemporary, has loaded him with praiſes. Is it poſſible that a courtier of Tiberius and Sejanus ſhould have written a hiſtory?

The minds of the great debaſed when the election of magiſ-

I ſhall finiſh this article with an obſervation of Monteſquieu. "Auguſtus had deprived the people of the "power of legiſlation, and of judging criminals againſt "the ſtate, but he had left them at leaſt in appearance

"the

" the privilege of electing the magiſtrates. Tiberius, " who apprehended danger from ſuffering ſo numerous a " body to aſſemble, deprived them of this power like- " wiſe, and conferred it upon the ſenate, that is, upon " himſelf. It is incredible what influence this change " had in debaſing the minds of the great. While the " people had the diſpoſal of dignities, the magiſtrates " who ſtood for them were certainly guilty of great " meanneſſes; but theſe were concealed by a kind of " magnificence with which they were attended. Whe- " ther the candidates entertained the people with public " ſhews or dinners, made diſtributions of money or corn, " though the motives were low, there was ſomething " noble in the means, becauſe it is always in character " for a great man to gain the favour of the people by " his liberalities. But when the people had no longer " any thing to give, and all employments were beſtowed " by the emperour in name of the ſenate, they were " ſolicited and obtained by unworthy methods: flattery, " infamy, and the blackeſt crimes, then became the " neceſſary arts of riſing."

trates is not in the hands of the people.

We may ſay, in more ſimple language, that the nobles loſt all elevation of mind, when they were obliged to be courtiers, or nothing.

CALIGULA.

CAIUS, univerſally known to the moderns by the name of Caligula, was the idol of the people, from his being the ſon of Germanicus. He was raiſed to the throne with unanimous approbation; and nothing could be more agreeable to the ſenate than to ſuperſede the will of Tiberius, who had aſſociated with him the young Tiberius, his grandſon: but merit is not inherited; and it is but too common to ſee the glory of great men tarniſhed by unworthy children. The pliant Caligula became a monſter after his elevation, which occaſioned its being ſaid of him, there never was a better ſervant nor a worſe maſter. However,

37. Caligula, though undeſerving, is at firſt beloved.

He does some good actions.

However, he ſhewed a good diſpoſition at the beginning of his reign, by recalling exiles, ſuppreſſing informers, and reſtoring the privileges of the magiſtrates and people; he gave leave for the reading of books written with freedom, which had been formerly proſcribed; and refuſed to receive a memorial containing an account of a real or pretended plot, nobly anſwering, that as he had done nothing to provoke hatred, he could not hearken to ſuch accuſations. Undoubtedly his apprehenſions of a rival made him diſſemble. Attentive to every means of pleaſing and dazzling the populace, he brought back the pantomimes which had been diſmiſſed by Tiberius. In plays, ſhews, and ſilly profuſion, he diſſipated immenſe ſums of money, which Suetonius ſays amounted to near three hundred million of ſeſterces*. This prodigality, abſtracted from the violent paſſion which he had for public ſhews, foreboded a pernicious government.

He is exceſſively laviſh to pleaſe the people.

He becomes a monſter of tyranny.

The face of affairs was very ſoon totally changed. Laws, manners, reaſon and humanity were trodden under foot, and Caligula bathed himſelf in blood. He began with the murder of Tiberius and Macro, and delighted in acts of cruelty. Guilty of inceſt with his ſiſters, and of adultery with every woman of rank, there was no exceſs could make him bluſh: he only bluſhed at having the great Agrippa, who was of obſcure birth, for his grandfather; and wanted to have it believed, that his mother Agrippina was the fruit of an inceſtuous commerce between Auguſtus and his daughter Julia.

His madneſs.

He aſſumed the characters of all the gods, and cauſed himſelf to be worſhipped, ſometimes as Jupiter, Juno, Bacchus, Hercules, &c. and at laſt, by an unexampled madneſs, treated his horſe as his firſt favourite, and thought of making him conſul.

What we ought to think of the facts mentioned by Suetonius.

Theſe facts, collected by Suetonius, a writer of no great judgment, ſuppoſe a manifeſt lunacy; and it is inconceivable how the Roman people could obey ſo furious a madman. The account which is given of his expenſes, rapine, and tyrannical oppreſſions, exceeds all probability.

* About 2,618,750*l.* ſterling.

probability. They are either inſtances of folly, unworthy the attention of a mind capable of reflection; or incredible exceſſes, which paſs the bounds of human nature.

Inſtances of his cruelty.

Some ſayings of Caligula expreſs whatever can be conceived of cruelty.—*Strike in ſuch a manner that he may feel himſelf die.—Would to heaven that the Roman people had but one head, that it might be ſtruck off at one blow.* Having burſt out into a fit of laughter before the conſuls—*I was thinking*, ſaid he, *that with a wink of my eye I could cauſe you both to be murdered.*

39. Some ridiculous military expeditions.

Caligula, equally baſe and bloody, took a fancy to appear at the head of his army, and exhibited a farce, of which the ridiculouſneſs has perhaps been greatly exaggerated by hiſtorians. He marched to the banks of the Rhine, as if he had been engaged in ſome important enterpriſe, and cauſed a detachment of his guard to be concealed in a wood, where he made them to be ſurpriſed, as if they had been enemies, that he might erect trophies and ſing ſongs of victory. He was next ſeen to paſs to the ſhore oppoſite to Great Britain, of which he meditated the conqueſt, and having drawn up his army, though without any enemy to oppoſe him, gave the ſignal to engage, after which he made his ſoldiers gather heaps of ſhells, and proud of the ſpoils of the ocean, returned to Rome to receive the honour of a triumph.

41. Murder of Caligula.

Though the Romans were debaſed by ſervility, it was impoſſible but the dreadful tyranny of a madman muſt produce conſpiracies. Cheræa, the tribune of a pretorian cohort, delivered Rome from that monſter, without freeing her from thoſe vices which perpetuate misfortunes. The tyrant was aſſaſſinated at the end of the fourth year of his reign. We ſhall ſee him ſucceeded by an idiot, and of courſe deplorable ſcenes are to be expected.

Obſervations on the hiſtorians who have writ-

Unfortunately for us, that part of the annals of Tacitus which contained the reign of Caligula is loſt; nothing can make up for the want of the pencil of that philoſophic

ten the life of Caligula.

philoſophic hiſtorian, ſo well acquainted with men and courts, and who engages the attention even in the moſt minute details. Scarcely any thing is to be met with in other authors but a heap of uſeleſs matter, or inſipid, diſguſting puerilities, with which modern writers ought not to ſwell their hiſtories.

CLAUDIUS.

41. The army proclaim Claudius, who was afraid of being killed.

AFTER the murder of Caligula, Cheræa and the ſenators wanted to reſtore the republic; but the ſoldiers, who found the benefit of a military power, preferred a government under an emperour. Claudius, the brother of Germanicus, and uncle of Caligula, far from aiming at the empire, was afraid of being murdered, and concealed himſelf in a corner, till he was accidentally obſerved by one of the ſoldiers, who immediately proclaimed him. Some more of the army having arrived, they led him away againſt his inclination, and joined to take the oath of allegiance. He promiſed the pretorian ſoldiers fifteen thouſand ſeſterces a man,* with a proportional donative to the officers; and had ſcarcely recovered from his fear and aſtoniſhment, when he found himſelf maſter of the empire. The ſenate were compelled to acknowledge him; Cheræa was put to death, and all hopes of liberty died with him.

Claudius not capable of governing.

Claudius, though fifty years old, was ſtill in a kind of childhood. A mind naturally weak, blunted by harſh education, and incapable of any kind of buſineſs; *a man half formed*, as his mother Antonia called him, who, with an idiotical grin, confuſed look, and vulgar manners, gave evident marks of folly and ſtupidity. This had alienated the affection of his parents, a misfortune which certainly added to his natural imbecility. Auguſtus alone ſhewed him ſome degree of tenderneſs, but ſtill could not find any employment of which he thought him capable. Could it have been conceived,

* About 121*l.* Engliſh.

conceived, that the caprice of fortune would one day place him on the throne of Auguſtus?

His good nature produced good effects at firſt.

Claudius, who was naturally of a mild temper, ſucceeding to Caligula, it required no great efforts to procure the higheſt degree of popularity. By a behaviour totally oppoſite to that of his predeceſſor, he ſucceeded for ſome time. He deſtroyed two liſts, entitled the *Sword and Dagger*, in which that monſter had written the names of thoſe whom he intended to put to death.

New year gifts aboliſhed.

He aboliſhed the preſents uſually made to the emperour on the firſt day of the year, which was a mean, contemptible method of extorting money:

Prohibits wills from being made in favour of the emperour.

he prohibited all who had relations of their own from making him their heir, another method by which the emperours did not bluſh to enrich themſelves. Clemency and humanity ſeemed to have ſucceeded to barbarity; but there was no confidence to be placed in a man ſuſceptible of all kinds of impreſſions, and who either did good or harm, according to the counſels by which he was governed.

He very ſoon becomes the ſlave of Meſſalina and his freed men.

Meſſalina, a woman who was the ſcandal of her ſex, the wife of the emperour, ſhared all his confidence with mean domeſtics, with a Narciſſus, a Pallas, and ſome other freed men; monſters of iniquity, whoſe enormous wealth could be only the produce of villainy. The people ſoon felt the dreadful effects of authority being veſted in ſuch hands. Every thing was ſold by his freed men, who in ſome degree made themſelves maſters both of his perſon and actions; admitting none to his preſence but whom they pleaſed; dictating or changing his ordinances; in a word, they reigned in his name, and were employed by Meſſalina in executing her execrable projects.

42. The method by which Meſſalina procured the death of Silanus.

This infamous princeſs, having conceived a paſſion for her father in law Silanus, and finding that ſhe could not ſeduce him, vowed his deſtruction, and concerted the plan with Narciſſus, who, one morning at day break, ruſhed into the emperour's apartment, with an appearance of terrour in his countenance, and told him, that in a dream he had ſeen him murdered by Silanus:

Meſſalina aſſured him, that for ſeveral nights ſhe had had the ſame dream; and, at that inſtant the unfortunate Silanus having come into the chamber, in conſequence of his receiving a forged order, the timid Claudius, ſtarting at the appearance of a ſuppoſed aſſaſſin, cauſed him to be immediately put to death. From this inſtance we may judge of others.

Conſpiracy diſcovered, & puniſhed according to the pleaſure of the freed men.

Such ſhocking proofs of tyranny could not fail to occaſion conſpiracies; and Camillus, governour of Dalmatia, taking up arms, aſſumed the title of emperour; but was abandoned by his army, and murdered by one of the ſoldiers. At the time when moſt rigorous methods were taken to diſcover the accomplices, Meſſalina and the domeſtics took the opportunity of gratifying their hatred and rapacity. Claudius preſided at the trials in the ſenate, where the freed men had the inſolence to place themſelves, but where Narciſſus at leaſt received a reproof. Having aſked a freed man of Camillus what he would have done if his maſter had become emperour, the other very properly replied—*I would have ſtood at his back in ſilence.* Unfortunately, truths make no impreſſion againſt the inſolence of fortunate upſtarts.

Narciſſus in the ſenate.

Death of Arria and Pætus.

It was upon this occaſion that the celebrated Arria gave a moſt extraordinary proof of courage. Pætus, her huſband, who had been conſul, having been entangled in the conſpiracy, could not eſcape being put to death, and was adviſed by Arria to prevent the execution. Seeing him wavering and irreſolute, ſhe plunged a dagger into her own boſom, and as ſhe withdrew it, preſented it to him, ſaying—*Pætus, this does not hurt me.* The huſband followed the example of his wife.

43. Expedition into Great Britain.

It could never have been ſuſpected that Claudius had formed any ſchemes of ambition or making conqueſts; but, however, he undertook the reduction of Great Britain, which, according to Tacitus, had rather been pointed out than conquered by Cæſar. The Gauls being ſubdued, this conqueſt no longer preſented the ſame difficulties; but ought a poor, uncultivated, remote iſland,

iſland, inhabited only by ſavages, to have attracted the arms of a power, already oppreſſed by the number and extent of its provinces? Plautius was commanded to begin the expedition; but his ſoldiers mutinied, and ſaid, they would not go to fight beyond the bounds of the world. Narciſſus came to quiet the mutiny, when the ſoldiers inſultingly referred him to the *Saturnalia*,* reminding him of his former condition, and preferring rather to obey their general than hearken to a domeſtic.

Narciſſus inſulted by the army.

The emperour was greatly encouraged by the ſucceſs of the army under Plautius; and, being deſirous of appearing at the head of his troops, paſſed over to Britain, where he remained ſixteen days, took ſome ſtrong holds, and celebrated a triumph. Plautius, at the end of a war which had continued four years, reduced a conſiderable part of the country on the ſouth ſide of the Thames to a Roman province. A little time before this, Mauritania had met the ſame fate; and theſe additions to the empire only ſerved to haſten its decline.

Britain & Mauritania reduced into Roman provinces.

To his military exploits, of which Claudius was exceſſively vain, he next added the care of adminiſtering in civil matters, and aſſumed the office of cenſor. He iſſued a number of fooliſh edicts. Three letters added to the alphabet ſeemed to him a reformation of great conſequence, but they did not outlive him. Amidſt all his follies, ſome prudent regulations were made; but unfortunately they could not fail to ſhare the contempt with which every thing done by that prince was treated.

Claudius iſſues a number of fooliſh & ſome good edicts.

Counſellors made an infamous trade of an honourable profeſſion; they ſold their tongues and pens, to ſerve the purpoſes of calumny and injuſtice, to whoever would pay the price of proſtituted talents. Silius, the conſul elect, wanted to put a ſtop to this mode of plundering. *They multiply accuſations, quarrels, and acts of injuſtice, that they may enrich themſelves by chicanery*, ſaid he, *as phyſicians do with diſorders. We ſhould not have ſo many lawſuits if the counſellors did not profit by them.* The coun-

He regulates the fees of counſellors.

* At the feaſt of the Saturnalia, the ſlaves were permitted to take great liberties with their maſters.

ſellors replied, that they gave up their own affairs to ſerve other people; that eloquence was an honourable road to fortune, and if they were deprived of the fruits of their ſtudies, there would be an end to application; they were prohibited by the emperour from receiving more than ten thouſand ſeſterces.

If the profeſſion could be carried on at this time without pecuniary advantages.

Thoſe days were over, in which glory, patriotiſm, or the hope of riſing to the firſt honours of the ſtate, were ſufficient motives to animate men to ſteer this courſe. If advantages were not to be attained by people who had no fortune, or were deſtitute of generoſity, the bar might have been entirely ſhut up. But it was likewiſe neceſſary that the reputation of the counſellors, among whom were always a number of ſenators, ſhould be guarded from every ſuſpicion of meanneſs. The ancient regulation was revived by Trajan.

Foreigners admitted as citizens, & likewiſe into the ſenate.

The emperour likewiſe decided in another affair of much greater conſequence to the ſtate. The people of Ciſalpine Gaul and the province of Narbonne enjoyed all the privileges of Roman citizens. This title had been conferred upon the chiefs of the other Gauliſh provinces after Cæſar's conqueſt, but without the privilege of being admitted into the ſenate, which was an honour they were very anxious to obtain, and at laſt procured in oppoſition to the moſt powerful repreſentations. Claudius expected to add to the ſtrength of the empire, by admitting foreigners to riſe to the firſt honours of the ſtate, which in the end was carried beyond all bounds.

Whether it did good or harm.

By this means, ſays Boſſuet, *all the ſubjects of the empire thought themſelves Romans. The honours of a victorious people were gradually communicated to thoſe whom they had ſubdued; a place in the ſenate was open to them, and they might even hope to arrive at the imperial throne. Thus, by Roman clemency, all the provinces uniting with Rome, made but one nation, of which ſhe was the common parent.* On the contrary, it may be ſaid, that there were no longer any Romans, when all diſtinctions were thrown down; that this mixture of all nations had annihilated the ruling people; that Rome ceaſed to be the object of patriotic

triotic affection when the greateſt part of her citizens neceſſarily preferred another country, and that this was one of the chief cauſes of her ruin.

When we reflect that there was no longer almoſt any of the original ſtock left even in Rome, this misfortune will appear unavoidable. At the time that Claudius took the number of the Roman citizens, they amounted to near ſeven millions, a number infinitely ſuperiour to what they were when the republic ſubdued the whole world.

Among the infinite number of citizens there were but few Romans.

While the emperour was employed, or ſeemed to be employed, in public affairs, his wife, who ruled him as ſhe pleaſed, openly gave herſelf up to the moſt ſhameful debaucheries, and, glutted with pleaſures, delighted in rendering herſelf infamous. Having fallen in love with Silius, ſhe made him divorce his wife, who was of noble birth; but that was only a ſmall part of her offence, compared with her having been ſolemnly married to him while Claudius was on a journey to Oſtia. An incredible fact, if it had not the teſtimony of every hiſtorian. The ſtupid emperour was informed of it by ſome of his freed men, who had hitherto been the inſtruments employed by Meſſalina in her poiſonings, and other enormous crimes, but whom ſhe had the indiſcretion at laſt to provoke.

48. Meſſalina marries Silius unknown to her huſband.

Struck with conſternation, and trembling at the news, he exclaimed, *Am I ſtill emperour?* They diſpelled his fears; and Silius, Mneſter, the pantomime, and a number of other accomplices in the lewdneſs of his wife, were put to death. She was preparing to appeaſe his anger, and probably would have ſucceeded, if Narciſſus had not given orders to kill her. Claudius neither teſtified joy nor ſorrow; and when he was informed of her death, he had not the curioſity to inquire by what means it happened.

She is put to death.

He had already married three wives, and his domeſtics, who might more properly be called his maſters, determined him to marry a fourth. His niece, Agrippina, the daughter of Germanicus, and widow of Domitius,

Claudius marries his niece Agrippina, & the ſenate approve the match.

mitius, was preferred to be empreſs, through the influence of Pallas, who was one of her gallants. She was another Meſſalina, though her behaviour was not ſo openly ſcandalous, but her ambition was as violent and criminal as that of the former. Claudius pretended to have ſome ſcruples, becauſe they were ſo nearly related; but this obſtacle was ſoon removed, by one of his courtiers getting the ſenate to approve of the marriage. Some of the ſenators carried their abject flattery ſo far as to ſay, that in caſe of refuſal the emperour ſhould be compelled, though at the ſame time it was univerſally known that he indulged in all the privileges of a huſband. A decree was paſſed to empower uncles to marry the daughters of their brothers. In another caſe they would probably have given leave for the brother to marry the ſiſter: ſo eaſily did they make the laws yield to the reigning power. There were but one or two men who took the advantage of this indulgence, which undoubtedly was owing to the influence that morals ſtill had on the minds of the moſt abandoned; or rather, becauſe ſuch marriages could have ſeldom happened, though they had been lawful.

Ambition of Agrippina. How ſhe procured the empire for Nero.

The great object of Agrippina's attention was to govern, and to ſecure the empire for her ſon, the young Domitius. She made uſe of baniſhments, poiſon, murders, and every criminal reſource, to get rid of whoever could obſtruct her ſchemes. She made a match between her ſon and the emperour's daughter Octavia, and procured his adoption to the prejudice of Britannicus, the brother of Octavia. Seneca, who was celebrated for his wit and oſtentatious diſplay of philoſophy, had been baniſhed for being guilty of adultery with a princeſs; but Agrippina imagining that he might be uſeful to Nero, (the new name of Domitius) had him recalled, that he might make up by his inſtructions for the bad education of that prince. She placed Burrhus, a brave and worthy officer, who ſhe thought might be attached to her from gratitude, at the head of the pretorian guards. In a word, Claudius, who ſaw nothing but

through

through her eyes, left her the ſole guidance of every thing. She was afraid that Domitia, the ſiſter of her firſt huſband, might rival her influence over Nero, and therefore cauſed her to be accuſed of ſorcery, and condemned to ſuffer death for an imaginary offence.

Domitia condemned for ſorcery.

54. In the mean time the emperour gave ear to Narciſſus, who was become the enemy of Agrippina, becauſe ſhe made Pallas her ſole favourite. He ſhewed his ſorrow for the injuſtice he had done to Britannicus, and gave vent to ſome threatening expreſſions againſt his wife; but ſhe prevented any bad conſequences to herſelf or her ſon. Not ſatisfied with cauſing Narciſſus to be removed from court, ſhe employed the talents of the celebrated Locuſta to poiſon her huſband. Claudius died at ſixty three years of age.

The emperour poiſoned by his wife.

His receivers, who were private knights, or even freed men, whoſe duty it was to collect his revenues in the provinces, were veſted with all the authority of magiſtrates, and their ſentences declared to be as valid as thoſe of the emperour; by which means the provinces were given up to the oppreſſions of tax gatherers.

He gave up the provinces to be ruled by receivers.

By a decree of the ſenate, Pallas was honoured with the enſigns of the pretorial dignity, the emperour entreated to make him wear a gold ring, and fifteen millions of ſeſterces * were decreed to him as a reward for his ſervices. The freed man declined to receive the gift; upon which a new decree was paſſed in his honour, repreſenting him as the reviver of ancient manners, though he was poſſeſſed of immenſe wealth. Could the minds of men have been more debaſed by Aſiatic deſpotiſm?

Honours conferred upon Pallas, a worthleſs freed man.

During this reign, Mithridates, a king of Armenia, was depoſed and murdered by Rhadamiſtus, who was his nephew, his brother in law, and ſon in law. The crimes committed by ambition, ſo common all over the Eaſt, no longer excite curioſity, becauſe a ſlaviſh, barbarous people are unworthy the attention of cultivated minds; but to ſee Rome immerſed in guilt, a prey to all

Rhadamiſtus uſurps the crown of Armenia.

Rome ſunk in baſeneſs.

* About 121,093*l.* Engliſh.

all the horrours of tyranny, and, while the miſtreſs of the world, ſunk to the loweſt pitch of baſeneſs, is an object which cannot fail to give birth to the moſt ſerious reflections.

Its progreſs.

Corruption has been ſeen to ſpring up by degrees. What a number of atrocious deeds has it not occaſioned in the republic! However, the Romans at that time preſerved ſome remains of their former greatneſs of ſoul: even while they were ſelling themſelves to ſupport the views of ambition, they ſhewed the high ſpirit and courage of their anceſtors; but now they are ſeen to crouch baſely under their chains, and even to flatter the infamous vices of thoſe by whom they are oppreſſed. Thus the ruin of morals leads to ſlavery, and ſlavery annihilates every idea of morals.

NERO.

CHAP. I.

From Nero's Acceſſion till the War in Britain.

54. Ridiculous apotheoſis of Claudius.

THE death of Claudius was kept ſecret till Agrippina had made ſuch arrangements as the circumſtances required. Burrhus cauſed Nero to be recognized by the pretorian guards, and the ſenate eagerly followed their example. The ſtupid prince, who had juſt ended his days by poiſon, was ranked among the gods, and the new emperour ſpoke his funeral oration, in which his prudence and wiſdom were highly extolled. This eulogium, though delivered by the prince, provoked the laughter of the audience; and Seneca, who had compoſed it, afterwards wrote a ſatire on the divinity of Claudius: But how had he the aſſurance to put ridiculous falſehoods into the mouth of his pupil? Till that time the emperours had ſhewn, though in different degrees, ſome talents for oratory and compoſition. Nero, who was then only in his ſeventeenth year, applied himſelf

Seneca, who had contributed towards it, makes it a ſubject of ridicule.

himſelf to every other kind of exerciſe, or rather amuſement. His inclinations, though yet diſguiſed, were entirely on the ſide of frivolity, and even vice. Being an enemy to buſineſs, he owed his firſt reputation to two men, who managed affairs for him.

Nero begins well, becauſe Seneca & Burrhus managed the government for him.

Burrhus and Seneca, between whom ſubſiſted the cloſeſt union, did ſome excellent things in his name. The courts of juſtice recovered their authority, and for a time deſpotiſm ceaſed to alarm the people; the public happineſs was announced by a diſcourſe breathing the ſpirit of moderation, which was pronounced by the prince, and afterwards engraven upon tables of ſilver; and all hearts were charmed by an affecting expreſſion of Nero—*I wiſh I had not learned to write*, ſaid he, before ſigning a death warrant. On another occaſion, the ſenate rerurning him thanks, he replied—*I expect them when I ſhall be worthy of them.* Nothing is ſo eaſy for ſovereigns, when properly tutored, as to dazzle by fine appearances; but theſe only increaſe the miſery of the public, when it is undeceived by facts.

The beginning of his reign impoſed upon the people.

We have lately ſeen ſeveral deteſtable reigns begun with meaſures extremely well calculated for the public good. The emperours ſeemed to have endeavoured at firſt to gain the confidence of their ſubjects, in order to lull them aſleep under the yoke of deſpotiſm. The new reign will preſent a picture of equal horrour with any of the preceding; becauſe the miniſters, who at the beginning followed the dictates of virtue, could not inſpire the love of it into a prince, who was led by every inducement to the commiſſion of evil.

55. Nero, being corrupted, is deſirous of getting rid of Britannicus.

Nero, who was already corrupted by flatterers, ſlighting his illuſtrious conſort, Octavia, threw himſelf into the arms of a freed woman; and this amour was winked at by Seneca and Burrhus, probably from an apprehenſion that oppoſition might be productive of ſtill greater miſchiefs. But Agrippina, whoſe rage was inflamed to the higheſt pitch, for having loſt her aſcendancy, ſeized that opportunity of openly ſhewing her reſentment, and threatened her ſon with declaring in favour of Britanni-

cus,

cus, whom ſhe had ſacrificed to him, and who, being then about thirteen or fourteen years of age, might ſoon become a formidable rival.

Poiſons him, and perſecutes Agrippina.

Upon this, Nero threw off all reſtraint, and daringly committed a crime of the blackeſt dye; cauſing the young prince to be poiſoned at a banquet, in his own and his mother's preſence. He then diſtributed the ſpoils of the deceaſed to Burrhus, Seneca, and the principal men of the court; probably with a deſign to buy them over to his intereſt; after which he publiſhed an edict, declaring, that now he had loſt his brother all his hopes were centred in the republic. Agrippina, being unable longer to ſmother her rage, was forbid the palace, and accuſed of treaſon; but ſhe found means to juſtify herſelf, and her reſentment ſubſided upon being reſtored to ſome appearance of credit.

His nocturnal rambles.

After ſo horrid a crime, committed in cool blood, it is not at all ſurpriſing that Nero ſo far ſhook off all rules of decency, as to diſguiſe himſelf, and ramble about the ſtreets in the night, accompanied by a ſet of young debauchees, inſulting ſome, robbing others, expoſing himſelf to a thouſand affronts, ſometimes beaten by thoſe who did not know him, and applauding himſelf for theſe low frolics. The ſenator Montanus, having treated him very roughly in one of his nocturnal rambles, and being afterwards informed that it was the emperour, had the imprudence to write to him a letter of excuſe; and received for anſwer the following ſhort billet—*What! a man who has beaten Nero ſtill alive!* The only refuge left for Montanus was a voluntary death.

The government ſupports itſelf, but cannot do ſo long.

The affairs of the ſtate, being in the hands of two able miniſters, ſuffered little by theſe irregularities of the ſovereign. Several taxes were aboliſhed, and the extortions of the collectors of the revenue reſtrained by an equitable regulation. Leſs would have been ſufficient to win the affections of the people, whoſe views are limited to the preſent time, and do not penetrate into futurity. But the murder of Britannicus, the debaucheries and follies of Nero, were preſages of all the horrours

of

of tyranny. Neither Seneca nor Burrhus could long preſerve any influence over him; a licentious woman hurried him on to new crimes.

Poppæa draws Nero into the commiſſion of parricide.

Poppæa then made a brilliant figure at Rome by her beauty, gracefulneſs, wit, and immenſe fortune; in a word, ſhe was a woman poſſeſſed of every qualification except virtue. Otho, a man of pleaſure, but entirely deſtitute of honour, and regardleſs of the ties of morality, had ſeduced her from her huſband, and afterwards married her. The emperour conceiving a violent paſſion for her, ſhe ſoon aſpired to the honour of his bed; but foreſeeing that Agrippina would not ſuffer him to divorce Octavia, ſhe reſolved to effect her ruin, and painted her in the blackeſt colours. She excited againſt that haughty princeſs the jealouſy of her ſon, by telling him, that he was ſtill kept in a ſtate of pupilage; that his mother had engroſſed the whole power, while he was not even maſter of his own conduct; and at laſt drew him into the commiſſion of parricide.

59. Nero cauſes his mother Agrippa to be aſſaſſinated. Contrivance for that murder.

As neither the ſword nor poiſon ſeemed proper inſtruments for the commiſſion of that crime, which it was of the laſt importance to ſhroud in impenetrable darkneſs, an abandoned freed man propoſed to conſtruct a veſſel, in ſuch a manner that a part of it might ſeparate when on the high ſea, and ſink to the bottom. The contrivance was highly applauded; for who could ſuſpect any artifice in a ſhipwreck? Nero, in order to draw his mother into the ſnare, feigned a return of affection; by which ſhe was eaſily deceived, paid him a viſit at Baiæ, and went on board the veſſel. The machine did not play and cruſh her to pieces, as was expected; and though her attendants periſhed, ſhe got ſafe on ſhore.

Burrhus and Seneca conſulted.

This news filled the emperour with conſternation; he imagined that he already ſaw his mother arming the ſoldiers and people againſt him; he therefore immediately conſulted Burrhus and Seneca on this emergency. Theſe miniſters, who were ſuſpected not to have been unacquainted with the former project, heſitated at firſt; but

but at laſt, whether through ſhameful want of ſpirit, or deteſtable motives of policy, they acceded to the emperour's views. Orders were given for the perpetration of the crime; and the freed man, Anicetus, eagerly undertook the commiſſion. Agrippina, at ſight of the aſſaſſins, called out to their leader—*Strike this womb which bore Nero*; and expired, pierced with a multitude of wounds. Thus were the numberleſs crimes ſhe committed to raiſe the fortune of her ſon, or rather to ſhare the dominion with him, puniſhed by that very ſon, by the commiſſion of the moſt atrocious wickedneſs.

They calm the remorſe of the emperour.

Few men, however diſtinguiſhed by their crimes, have a ſoul ſufficiently callous to be proof againſt remorſe. Even Nero felt its ſevereſt pangs; and terrour for his own ſafety, joined to the clamours of conſcience, reduced him almoſt to deſpair. Too ſhort a puniſhment for parricide! But flattery found a way to diſſipate the ſtorm. Burrhus relieved his fears, by ſhewing how entirely the pretorian guards were devoted to his intereſt. Seneca compoſed an apology for him, in which Agrippina was falſely charged with conſpiring againſt his life; and in a ſhort time the ſenate, the people, and the army, ſhewed the greateſt demonſtrations of joy for the commiſſion of ſo horrid an act, for which they even offered ſacrifices, and made it an occaſion of feſtivity.

Signs ſuſpected to be marks of divine wrath.

However, ſeveral phenomena in the heavens, an eclipſe, and ſtorms of thunder, were looked upon as ſigns of the divine wrath; in which, ſays Tacitus, the gods had ſo little concern, that Nero enjoyed the empire for a conſiderable number of years, which he ſpent in the commiſſion of new crimes. The ſecrets of Providence are impenetrable; nor can they be read in the phenomena of nature, which every man interprets according to his own fancy. God will one day puniſh or reward: this is all that it concerns us to know. But ſuperſtition endeavours to pry into futurity, and miſleads itſelf.

Nero gives himſelf up to ridiculous amuſements.

Agrippina had been a curb to Nero; but, being now freed from her inſpection, he gave the rein to his taſte for low and futile amuſements. His whole attention

was

was taken up with chariots, horſes, muſic and plays; he exhibited firſt to his courtiers, and then to the public, his talents as a charioteer and actor; and kept a number of people in pay only for the purpoſe of applauding him in thoſe ridiculous farces. His nobleſt amuſements conſiſted in compoſing wretched verſes, corrected by obſcure poets, according to their own fancy; or in liſtening to the diſputes of a ſet of pretended philoſophers, whom he retained for his diverſion. During his fourth conſulſhip (for the emperours had always continued the cuſtom of aſſuming occaſionally the title of conſul, ſometimes for a few months) he inſtituted games after the Greek model, to be celebrated every fifth year; to which he gave the name of *Neronian*. He diſputed the prize of poetry and eloquence againſt the firſt men of thoſe profeſſions in Rome; and would certainly have carried it, even though his competitors had been Ciceros and Virgils. The pantomimes were ſoon after brought into vogue, and their art was carried to an aſtoniſhing degree of perfection. It is related, that a philoſopher, ſtruck with the performance of one of thoſe mute actors, exclaimed, *I underſtand you; your hands ſpeak.*

Neronian games.

Pantomimes.

It will not be improper to obſerve, that if the Romans had always entertained a paſſion for public diverſions, without a taſte for ſuch as are really worthy of a poliſhed people, this paſſion and bad taſte muſt have been increaſed, when they ceaſed to take a ſhare in public affairs, and were given up to the caprices of a court. They had no good tragedies; and Terence had never been able to make them loſe their reliſh for farces. The gladiators always carried the palm from the poets. It may indeed be alledged in favour of the pantomimes, that they did not ſtain the ſcene with blood: but they too frequently tranſgreſſed the laws of decency.

Vitiated taſte of the Romans.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

War in Great Britain.—Affairs of Rome till the firſt Conſpiracy.

Revolt in Great Britain.

THE more a ſovereign indulges himſelf in pleaſures, the more miſerable, commonly, are the people. Great Britain groaned under a tyrannical government, from the oppreſſion of the army, and the extortion of the collectors of the revenue; and the ſpirit of revolt ſpread rapidly among that unconquerable people, who ſubmitted only to ſuperiour force, and champed the curb with indignation. Suetonius Paulinus, a celebrated general, who had newly arrived in that country, being unacquainted with the ſtate of affairs, undertook the conqueſt of Mona (the iſle of Angleſey) where the Druids had fixed the centre of their fanaticiſm. He ſucceeded, notwithſtanding the terrour with which the Romans were ſtruck by the horrid appearance of thoſe prieſts, who ran up and down, accompanied by women in a hideous dreſs, with torches in their hands, and filled the air with their imprecations. After the defeat of the barbarians, he cauſed his ſoldiers to cut down the ſacred groves, in which the Druids religiouſly ſtained the altars with human blood.

Conqueſt of Mona.

61. Suetonius defeats queen Boadicea.

Suetonius, who had ben ſucceſsful at Mona, did not entertain the leaſt ſuſpicion of what was carrying on behind him. The Britons had taken arms under the ſtandards of Boadicea, a heroine ſuperiour to every ſenſe of danger, ſtormed ſeveral fortified places, and maſſacred great numbers of the Romans; and though the general marched with all imaginable ſpeed to put a ſtop to the inſurrection, he was obliged to abandon London to deſtruction. But, having collected a body of ten thouſand men, he choſe a poſt ſo advantageous, that the enemy, though infinitely ſuperiour in number, were defeated in a great battle, with the loſs, as is ſaid, of fourſcore thouſand men; and Boadicea laid violent hands on herſelf, that ſhe might not ſurvive the misfortunes of her country.

Suetonius,

That general recalled.

Suetonius, being thwarted by the jealouſy of the queſtor, reaped no advantage from his victory; and Nero ſent Polyctetes, a freed man, to inquire into his conduct. The pride and inſolence of this envoy raiſed the contempt even of the Britons, who ſaw, with aſtoniſhment, a lacquey giving law to a victorious general. Paulinus was recalled, and his ſucceſſors carefully avoided a war, pluming themſelves on the preſervation of a tranquillity, which was only the effect of their own effeminacy; and thus ſecured themſelves from the malice of the court, though the intereſts of the ſtate ſuffered by their conduct.

Four hundred ſlaves put to death becauſe one of them had murdered his maſter.

Some tranſactions at Rome have a better claim to our attention. The prefect of the city being aſſaſſinated by one of his ſlaves, it was made a queſtion, whether, according to the barbarous cuſtom eſtabliſhed in ancient times, capital puniſhment ſhould be inflicted on the whole number, amounting to four hundred. The people were clamorous in their oppoſition, and their ſentiments were ſupported by a party in the ſenate; but Caſſius, a celebrated lawyer, ſtood forth in defence of the ancient cuſtom. *It is objected*, ſaid he, *that many innocent perſons will be put to death: but this is only what happens when troops are decimated for miſbehaviour*; *the brave draw lots in common with the guilty. Every ſimilar example of ſeverity contains in it ſomething contrary to the rules of juſtice*; *but the partial evil is compenſated by the general good:* and his ſanguinary counſel prevailed over the voice of humanity.

Barbarity of the law in this caſe.

Thus barbarous cuſtoms, conſecrated by their antiquity, are ſometimes abetted by perſons who ought to be better acquainted with the injuſtice of them. According to this method of reaſoning, it was neceſſary for the public good that thouſands of lives ſhould anſwer for one, and the crime of an individual be puniſhed by the death of all. Doubtleſs the ſlaves were ranked among inſects. The Petronian law indeed prohibited their being expoſed to wild beaſts, without permiſſion from the magiſtrates: a law calculated in ſome degree

to

to mitigate the horrours of their condition, if we ſuppoſe the magiſtrates to be men of humanity. But is it poſſible that they could be ſo under a tyrant, and with the prejudices of tyranny?

Laws againſt high treaſon revived.

Some ſatirical writings making their appearance about this time, Nero revived the laws againſt high treaſon. Antiſtius, the pretor, would have been put to death on this account, had not Thraſea courageouſly given his opinion only for baniſhment. Veiento, another perſon of diſtinction, ſuffered the ſame puniſhment, and his books were ordered to be burnt. Their being prohibited cauſed them to be eagerly ſought after; and, as is the common fate of ſuch works, they ſunk into oblivion when they were no longer dangerous.

62. Death of Burrhus. Seneca retires.

Burrhus and Seneca, notwithſtanding they ſometimes ſhewed a diſgraceful complaiſance to the tyrant, were the only perſons in any degree capable of mitigating the horrours of his government. Unhappily the firſt died, and his maſter is ſuſpected of having ſhortened his life. Seneca, finding himſelf on the brink of diſgrace, reſolved to prevent it by a voluntary retreat, and offered to the emperour the immenſe riches he had acquired; but Nero refuſed to accept them, beſtowed on him new marks of confidence and affection, and put on an appearance of regret, though filled with a ſecret joy at his removal from court. The works of this philoſopher wear an impoſing air of ſtoiciſm, which it is impoſſible to reconcile with his opulence and luxury. We ſhall ſee him die with a courage which only renders the weakneſſes of his life more ſurpriſing.

Murder of Octavia, and other crimes committed by Nero.

Tigellinus, the new captain of the pretorian guards, a monſter worthy of Nero, became the inſtrument of his crimes. In a ſhort time Octavia was not only divorced and baniſhed, but murdered; and her head may be ſaid to have been the nuptial preſent beſtowed on Poppæa, her infamous rival. To complete this ſcene of villainy, and blacken the memory of the innocent empreſs, the freed man, Anicetus, affirmed, that ſhe had been guilty of adultery with him; and he could not have

have found a more proper method of paying his court to the emperour. After the death of Octavia, ſolemn thankſgivings were offered to the gods: a ceremony which always followed the murder of perſons of diſtinction. Thus did Nero ſport with heaven and mankind.

His cruelty was equalled by his debaucheries. At an entertainment given him by Tigellinus, he perſonated a female, and, as ſuch, was married to one Pythagoras; on another occaſion he eſpouſed an eunuch, whom he choſe for his bride. Theſe abominations ought not to ſtain the hiſtoric page, did they not ſhew how much the abuſe of power and intoxication of the paſſions may degrade a ſovereign; and at leaſt prove, that by trampling on the laws of ſociety and nature, he expoſes himſelf to the moſt incredible defamations. Horrid debaucheries.

To him is attributed a conflagration, by which more than two thirds of Rome were deſtroyed; a report was publicly circulated, that he had viewed it with pleaſure from the top of a tower, ſinging a poem on the burning of Troy. Theſe reports were probably the effects of hatred; for what might not be believed of Nero? He had looked with uneaſineſs upon the irregularity of the city, and its narrow, crooked ſtreets; and cauſed it to be rebuilt in a manner which increaſed its beauty, and made it more ſecure from fires. A magnificent palace roſe upon the public ruins, ſhining with gold and jewels, and containing in its circuit, foreſts, lakes, and lawns, with all the riches of art. When Nero ſaw it finiſhed, he obſerved—*Now I begin to lodge like a human creature.* A great man would have had no need of ſuch a lodging. Burning of Rome. Nero's new palace.

His head being filled with extravagant ideas, he undertook to dig a navigable canal, from the lake Avernus to the mouth of the Tiber, a ſpace of one hundred and ſixty miles, through a rocky country without water. The work was impracticable, and, had it been poſſible to be executed, would have been of no great utility. Great labour was expended upon it; and ſo much toil and pains thrown away were counted as nothing. The His ruinous and impracticable project for a canal.

ſubſtance of the empire was waſted by the emperour's exceſſive profuſion and extravagant ſchemes; and therefore he made it a rule to commit univerſal depredations.

The Chriſtians accuſed of ſetting fire to the city, and cruelly puniſhed.

Though he had been laviſh in adminiſtering relief to the people after the fire, yet the voice of the public continued to charge him with having kindled it; and he thought he could clear himſelf by throwing the accuſation upon innocent perſons. The Chriſtians were already numerous, though buried in obſcurity; and the public, unacquainted with their religion, confounded it with the groſſeſt ſuperſtitions. They were hated becauſe looked upon to be enemies of the human race; this unjuſt character is given them even by Tacitus, who ſeems to confound them with the Jews. Nero charged them with being the incendiaries; and a vaſt number of them were put to death by the moſt dreadful puniſhments; a ſpectacle agreeable to the Roman taſte! He himſelf, ſeated on a car, made it a piece of amuſement to ſee thoſe unhappy victims devoured by beaſts, or burned alive, to ſupply the place of torches; and their condemnation was looked upon as one of the pleaſures of his cruelty.

CHAP. III.

End of Nero's Reign.

65. Conſpiracy of Piſo and Epicharis.

THIS monſter at laſt tired out the patience of his ſubjects; and a number of perſons of rank, animated by the freed woman Epicharis, with Piſo at their head, entered into a conſpiracy againſt him; the ſecret was inviolably kept, but a ſlave gueſſed the meaning of his maſter's preparations, and ſome of the conſpirators were ſeized, by whoſe want of reſolution the reſt were diſcovered. Epicharis bore the torture with heroic courage, which was the more remarkable as ſhe was a woman of pleaſure. Torrents of blood flowed in every quarter. Piſo, juſt before his death, made his will, filled with the moſt fulſome adulation of Nero, that he might

might obtain favour for a faithleſs wife, of whom he was diſtractedly fond.

Courage of ſome of the conſpirators.

On the contrary, two of the conſpirators diſplayed their principles of liberty with the nobleſt intrepidity. The emperour interrogating Subrius why he had violated his oath, the tribune replied—*Becauſe I hated you. No man was more faithful to you while you deſerved to be beloved; but when you became the parricide of your mother, the murderer of your wife, a charioteer, a player, and an incendiary, you neceſſarily was the object of my averſion.* Theſe words wounded the tyrant in the moſt ſenſible manner. The centurion Sulpicius anſwered a like queſtion by ſaying —*I entered into the conſpiracy out of zeal for your ſervice, as there was no other way to put an end to your crimes.*

Seneca obliged to open his veins.

The high reputation of Seneca and Lucan make their deaths more intereſting. The firſt was accuſed (and perhaps on good grounds, though the proofs were not entirely clear) of being privy to the plot; and his pupil, who hated him in his heart, was delighted with this opportunity to get rid of him; an order was therefore ſent him to put an end to his life, and he opened his veins, in which he was imitated by his wife Paulina. Not being able to obtain permiſſion to make any bequeſts in favour of his friends—*I leave you*, ſaid he, *the moſt precious gift remaining to me, the example of my life.* This fine genius will never be the model of true philoſophers or good writers. He vitiated taſte by his affected ſtyle; and the oſtentatious auſterity of his moral writings was contradicted by his actions.

He is a bad model.

Death of Lucan.

Lucan, the Seneca of the poets, ſuffered the ſame death. He had flattered Nero in his Pharſalia; but afterwards became his mortal enemy, from a reſentment common to authors, becauſe the prince, who dabbled in poetry, had ſhewn himſelf a jealous rival, and mortified his vanity.

Death of Petronius, Soranus, and Thraſea.

A number of illuſtrious men were now put to death upon the leaſt ſuſpicion. I ſhall not mention Petronius, that elegant Epicurean, Nero's maſter in the ſcience of voluptuouſneſs, and the reputed author of an obſcene

and ingenious ſatire, of which ſome fragments are extant. But I muſt not paſs over in ſilence Soranus and Thraſea, two ſenators worthy of ancient Rome, but whoſe virtues were imputed to them as crimes, by a court ſunk in every abomination.

Remarkable trial of Thraſea.

The crimes alledged againſt Thraſea, were his not offering ſacrifices for the preſervation of the emperour and his *divine voice*; blaming his appearing on the ſtage; quitting the ſenate houſe when the apology for Agrippina's murder was read; and abſenting himſelf when divine honours were decreed to Poppæa, who was ranked among the goddeſſes, after her huſband, in a fit of paſſion, had given her a kick with his foot, of which ſhe died; with other charges of the ſame nature. Thraſea being a Stoic, both by practice and profeſſion, his accuſers did not fail to repreſent that ſect as pernicious to the ſtate, by inſpiring its followers with a love of liberty. That illuſtrious Roman, being condemned by the ſenate, was indulged in the choice of his own death; a favour which was often readily granted. He prepared himſelf for his fate with calm reſignation, and, having cauſed his veins to be opened, ſprinkled the floor with his blood, at the ſame time ſaying—*Let us offer a libation to Jupiter the deliverer.* The firmneſs of the Stoic had not leſſened his indulgence for human frailty. He often repeated this maxim—*He who hates vices, hates mankind.* But ought we not rather to hate vice, and do good to the vicious?

His ſtoiciſm.

Tiridates at Rome, pays court to Nero, & deſpiſes him.

In the midſt of theſe ſcenes of horrour, arrived in Rome, Tiridates, brother of Vologeſes, king of Parthia, who had lately received the crown of Armenia as a free gift, after having long endeavoured in vain to ſeize it by force. This prince met with a moſt pompous reception from the emperour, and the more he humbled himſelf, the more favours were beſtowed on him; but, being a witneſs of Nero's frivolous and unbecoming amuſements, he at laſt looked with contempt on the man before whom he had fallen proſtrate. Corbulo, the greateſt general of the age, had till that time curbed the Par-

Corbulo condemn-

thians,

thians, who began to be very formidable to the Romans. In him the people placed their hopes, and all wiſhed to ſee him on the throne. Such ſuperiour merit was an unpardonable crime. Corbulo was recalled, and on the road received an order to put an end to his life. ed becauſe he was a great man.

Vologeſes, being preſſed by Nero to imitate his brother Tiridates, and pay him a viſit at Rome, wrote him for anſwer—*You can croſs the ſea more eaſily than I can; come into Aſia, and we will agree upon an interview.* The emperour, being provoked at this refuſal, had thoughts of marching againſt the Parthians, but another ſpecies of ambition turned his views to a different object. Vologeſes refuſes an invitation from the emperour.

He reſolved to take a journey into Greece, in order to gain the prize in the theatrical conteſts, and ſet out with a whole army of muſicians and buffoons. He preſented himſelf at all the games, gained a hundred and eighteen crowns, and imagined he had eclipſed all the heroes of the republic. To ſhew his gratitude for the admiration in which the Grecians held his talents, or rather the flattery with which they ſoothed his ridiculous vanity, he declared that country free; but notwithſtanding this imaginary enfranchiſement, it ſtill continued to groan under every ſpecies of oppreſſion. He then returned in triumph to Italy, and his entry into Rome formed an uncommon ſpectacle to that city, which was filled with trophies. The ſenate, the knights, and the people, followed his chariot, making the air reſound with diſgraceful acclamations of *Long live the victor in the Olympic and Pythian games; Nero is another Hercules; Nero is a new Apollo. He alone has been ſucceſsful in every ſpecies of combat, in every ſpecies of games, &c.* At the ſame time that the terrours of deſpotiſm forced the Romans to this abject behaviour, it redoubled their hatred againſt the deſpot. And we ſhall ſoon ſee them delivered from the tyrant by an almoſt univerſal conſpiracy. 67. Nero's ridiculous journey into Greece. Abject flattery beſtowed on him at his return.

Vindex gave the ſignal in Gaul, where he commanded. He was a native of that province, deſcended of an illuſtrious family, and a warm friend to his country. It was no difficult matter to rouſe a people who had not 68. Revolt of Vindex & Galba.

yet

yet loſt their high ſpirit, though loaded with oppreſſion. Being in want of ſuccours, he addreſſed himſelf to Galba, governour of Spain, a man of a mild and peaceful diſpoſition, deſcended from an ancient family, and who had eſcaped the cruelty of the tyrant only by his unenterpriſing temper and the obſcurity of his life. Galba, who was diſcontented with the government, heſitated on the propoſal, and conſulted his friends; who repreſented to him, that by deliberating on ſuch a ſubject, he had already made himſelf criminal, and that he muſt immediately either march againſt Vindex, who offered him the empire, or take arms againſt the emperour. At laſt he determined upon a revolt, but refuſed the title of emperour, with which his troops wanted to inveſt him, declaring himſelf only the lieutenant of the ſenate and people.

Death of Vindex, & moderation of Virginius.

On this news, the governours of the provinces, tranſported with joy at finding a head, eagerly joined his party. Virginius had a command in Germany, and, though ſecretly an enemy to Nero, marched againſt Vindex; but the two generals had an interview, and came to an agreement. The Gauls were to enter Beſançon as had been ſtipulated; but the Roman army, unacquainted with the treaty, and believing itſelf attacked, fell upon the troops of Vindex, which were cut to pieces, and the general killed himſelf in a fit of deſpair. Virginius might have made himſelf maſter of the empire; he did not eſteem Galba, and hated Nero; therefore, without declaring in favour of the former, he waited the event, reſolved to do his country all the ſervice poſſible. This man ſeveral times refuſed the ſovereignty, and died in the office of conſul under Nerva.

Nero abandons himſelf to his fears.

Had the tyrant been poſſeſſed of the leaſt degree of courage, perhaps he might have found means of diſſipating the ſtorm. But, far from taking any meaſures, or even forming a vigorous reſolution, he only ſhewed a ſtupid puſillanimity. Nymphidius, who was joint commander of the pretorian guards with Tigellinus, corrupted thoſe troops, by promiſing them immenſe ſums in

Galba's

Galba's name; and Nero, abandoned by his guards, fled in diſmay, to conceal himſelf in the houſe of a freed man. The ſenate, aſſembling, declared him an enemy to the ſtate, and as ſuch condemned him to be puniſhed *according to the ancient mode*, and proclaimed Galba emperour. This dreadful news was carried to Nero by the freed man, who explained to him what was meant by the *ancient mode*, that the criminal ſhould be tied to a beam, and be beaten to death with rods. Unable to bear the thoughts of ſuch a puniſhment, Nero with trembling hand tried the points of two daggers: but, diſarmed by his cowardice, he cried out, that the fatal hour was not yet come: however, a party of ſoldiers coming to ſeize him, he was obliged to have recourſe to the laſt remedy, and, ſummoning up his courage, preſented the point of his dagger, at the ſame time calling for the aſſiſtance of his ſecretary, by whoſe aid he plunged it into his throat. Thus died Nero at the age of thirty, leaving behind him a name which ſeems to expreſs the utmoſt depravity of human nature.

He is condemned to death.

He kills himſelf with difficulty.

With him ended the family of Auguſtus.

With him ended the family of Auguſtus.—A Tiberius, a Caligula, a Claudius, a Nero!—Theſe were the men for whom Auguſtus had uſurped the empire of the world, for whom Rome had ſubdued ſo many nations. Theſe were the maſters whom opulence, corruption of manners, the contempt of virtue, and prevalence of vice, had, for a long ſeries of years, been preparing for the Romans.

GALBA.—OTHO.—VITELLIUS.

68. Galba, made emperour, commits great faults.

AFTER the defeat of Vindex, Galba, imagining that he was ruined, withdrew to a city in Spain, and was even thinking of laying violent hands on himſelf, when he received the news of the revolution. Anxious to take the advantage of the change in affairs, but being old, rigid, and ſo ſevere an economiſt that he approached to avarice; incapable of conforming to circumſtances, too feeble at the age of ſeventy three to ſupport

port the weight of government, it was to him inevitable deſtruction. Let us take a curſory view of his faults, that we may ſee the ſource of his misfortunes.

He draws upon himſelf the hatred of the army.

Nothing could be ſo hazardous as to provoke the army, ſince they had lately beſtowed the imperial dignity, and could eaſily reſume the gift; however, Galba was ſcarcely arrived in Italy, when he cauſed a legion of marines to be maſſacred, who had been newly raiſed, and had applied to him for a confirmation of their eſtabliſhment. The pretorian guards expected the whole, or at leaſt a part of the money, which had been promiſed to them; but he daſhed their hopes by ſaying—*that an emperour chooſes, does not purchaſe, his ſoldiers.* From that moment they became his enemies: Could he hope to reign without them?

He gives cauſe for the people to complain.

On the other hand, the people, whom the preſents and entertainments of Nero had made inſenſible of his tyranny, murmured at the avarice of a prince who refuſed them the ſame amuſements. A number of citizens, who were ſtripped of the fortunes which they had acquired during the laſt reign, were provoked at their being ruined. Theſe proceedings were the more imprudent, as a number of acts of injuſtice had obſcured the few inſtances in which the proceeding was truly equitable. Nymphidius having formed a party to raiſe himſelf to the empire, Galba ordered a number of people of rank, who were accuſed without evidence, to be put to military execution. He ſpared the infamous Tigellinus, while he exerciſed his ſeverity againſt men who were much leſs hateful. Terrified at the ſmalleſt expenſe, he winked at the extortions of three of his agents, who ſet every thing to ſale, and greedily ſeized the opportunity of enriching themſelves. He ſeemed then not to be a miſer or economiſt, but to procure the means for his miniſters to make themſelves rich by their rapacity.

Acts of injuſtice.

Deſtructive economy.

69. Galba adopts Piſo, & gives him prudent advice.

The army in Germany were already deſirous to have another emperour, that is to ſay, they propoſed to elect one, and the revolt could not fail to prove contagious. Galba, ſenſible of his own weakneſs, wanted to find a

ſupport

ſupport in Piſo, who was leſs diſtinguiſhed by his illuſtrious birth, than by his eminent virtues, and therefore adopted him. His advice to Piſo, as given by Tacitus, is worthy of a ſage. Exhorting him to conduct himſelf with prudence and moderation—*This is not the country where one family governs and all the reſt are ſlaves*, ſaid he; *you are to reign over men who can neither endure total ſubjection nor perfect liberty.* Piſo had no opportunity to put his advice in practice.

Otho forms a ſcheme for ſeizing the empire.

There was a ſeditious perſon ſo provoked by the preference which Galba had given to Piſo, that he conſpired to deſtroy them both. This rival was Otho, the huſband of Poppæa, and the favourite of Nero, before the emperour was ſeduced by his wife. He was infamous for his luxury and debauchery, immerſed in debt to the amount of two hundred millions of ſeſterces,* and reduced to a ſituation from whence he had no means to extricate himſelf but by ſtriking a deſperate ſtroke. To fall in battle, or by the hand of juſtice, he ſaid, was to him nearly the ſame thing; and his friends and ſlaves adviſed him to run every hazard. He was likewiſe encouraged by the promiſes of aſtrologers—"A kind of "men," ſays Tacitus, "who impoſe upon people of "rank by ſeducing promiſes; who are always diſap-"proved of in our country, but ſtill encouraged." They promiſed the empire to Otho; and there was nothing he was more willing to believe.

He is proclaimed by the pretorian guards.

Two enterpriſing ſoldiers undertook to manage the conſpiracy, and kindled the flame of rebellion. On the day appointed, Otho was carried to the pretorian camp, where he was proclaimed by the ſoldiery, and the officers were hurried away by the torrent.

Death of Piſo and Galba.

Piſo and Galba were murdered, in attempting to put a ſtop to the diſturbance; and Otho took a pleaſure in looking attentively at their heads, beſmeared in blood. On the contrary, Galba made uſe of the following expreſſion, which was worthy of a great man, to a ſoldier who was boaſting of his having killed Otho—*Pray, who gave you orders?*

* About 1,614,583*l.* Engliſh.

ders? The proſcriptions, and the cruelty which had been exerciſed by thoſe emperours who ſucceeded to Auguſtus, had ſo entirely extinguiſhed the ancient families, that from the time of Galba there was not one emperour who was deſcended from them.

Vitellius proclaimed in Germany.

At the time that Otho, who had found no difficulty in getting himſelf acknowledged by the ſenate, was receiving the uſual homage of flattery, the ſovereign power was ſeized by a competitor. Before the murder of Galba, the legions in Germany had proclaimed their commander, Vitellius, emperour; whoſe infamous conduct during his youth, which was ſpent in company with Tiberius, would have been ſufficient to have rendered him contemptible, though he had not added new proofs of his worthleſſneſs, gluttony, drunkenneſs, meanneſs, and every abject vice. Some of the Gauls had declared in his favour; and his want of abilities to carry on the war were to be made up by the talents of his generals, Valens and Cecina. Otho, who had the citizens of Rome, the pretorian guards, and many legions, on his ſide, and whoſe elevation ſeemed to give ſcope to his genius, that appeared hitherto to have been ſunk in effeminacy, prepared to oppoſe them.

His vices.

Reſources of Otho.

War forgotten in Rome, for which they make unſkilful preparations.

From the time that Auguſtus had got the whole power into his hands, by means of his addreſs and violence, the art of war was forgotten in Italy. The pretorian guards led an idle, licentious life, and their debauchery was increaſed by the ſums continually laviſhed upon them by the emperours, as the only means of attaching them to their ſervice. The ſenators and knights were ſo ignorant of diſcipline, that their preparations ſeemed rather fitted for ſplendid feſtivals than the ſeverities of a campaign. The whole city was filled with terrour; and the idea of war was only pleaſing to thoſe reſtleſs ſpirits, and men of ruined fortunes, who placed their whole hopes in the public calamities. The time was now over when Rome, though corrupted, ſtill abounded with heroes.

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The firſt hoſtilities were unfavourable to Vitellius. Cicina was obliged to raiſe the ſiege of Placentia, and received a very important check before he was joined by his colleague; and when they met, they deſpiſed and mutually reviled one another. Otho was adviſed to temporize, which was certainly the beſt thing he could do in his preſent circumſtances; but, tired with ſuſpenſe, and perhaps dreading that his adherents would cool, he was reſolved to venture an engagement; but what was a more ſurpriſing fault, he did not appear there in perſon. He was perſuaded by his flatterers to withdraw while the army fought in his cauſe. Part of the pretorian guards attended him, but the reſt of the army could neither ſhew the ſame ardour, nor preſerve the ſame diſcipline in his abſence; and though commanded by two experienced generals, they no longer continued in ſubjection. At laſt the battle, fought at Bedriacum, between Mantua and Cremona, was decided in favour of Vitellius, where above forty thouſand men fell on both ſides. In the civil wars no advantage was to be gained by taking priſoners, becauſe they were not made ſlaves, which occaſioned more dreadful carnage. The news of the defeat was brought by a ſoldier, who, finding himſelf accuſed of impoſture and falſehood, confirmed the intelligence by killing himſelf at the feet of Otho.

Battle of Bedriacum deciſive in favour of Vitellius.

Carnage during the civil wars.

The emperour, being reſolved not to ſurvive a defeat, perſiſted in his deſign, notwithſtanding the entreaties of his friends and the ſoldiers, pleading motives of generoſity, to which it is not eaſy to give credit. Like Cato, he gave his laſt orders with the greateſt compoſure, and employed himſelf in providing for the ſafety of his adherents, after which he ſtabbed himſelf with his dagger. A number of his ſoldiers, from affection to his perſon, put themſelves to death. He reigned only three months. The mildneſs of his government during that ſhort ſpace does not prevent our ſuppoſing, that if he had got himſelf once firmly eſtabliſhed on the throne he would have followed the example of Nero, ſince he was guilty of the ſame

Otho kills himſelf, after a reign of three months.

ſame vices. When men are anxious to ſecure dominion, they make a good beginning; but, when they have no dangers to apprehend, give themſelves up to every ſpecies of wickedneſs.

Vitellius renders himſelf odious and contemptible.

In the mean time Vitellius, who was ſtill leſs worthy of reigning, received information, according to the uſual form, while he was in Gaul, that the ſenate had conferred upon him the ſovereign authority. He immediately paſſed into Italy, and, without deigning to ſave appearances, indulged himſelf in the cruel pleaſure of viſiting the field of battle, which was ſtill covered with the bodies of the dead. Some of his courtiers nauſeating the ſtench of the carcaſes—*A dead enemy always ſmells well*, ſaid he, *but more eſpecially a citizen*; an abominable expreſſion, which conveys every idea of the moſt horrid barbarity. Rome was now governed by a ſtupid, brutal tyrant, who was always immerſed either in wine or in blood; whoſe gluttony ſwallowed millions; whoſe palace was daily filled with bacchanalian riots; and whoſe ſoldiers, following the example of their maſter, indulged in every ſpecies of debauchery, and ſpread terrour and confuſion all round them. To give a perfect idea of him at one ſtroke, let us add, that he paid extraordinary honour to the memory of Nero.

Who Veſpaſian was, and by what ſteps he roſe.

Such a reign could not laſt long, at a time when the empire was given or taken away at the pleaſure of the army; and Vitellius was very ſoon threatened by Veſpaſian. This general, the ſon of a petty tax gatherer, had raiſed himſelf imperceptibly, under Caligula and Claudius, by mean ſervilities; for the great fortunes even of men of merit have ſcarcely ever any other origin in the courts of bad princes. In one word, he roſe under the auſpices of Narciſſus, and by his means arrived at the conſulſhip. Though not ſo fawning during the reign of Nero, whoſe ridiculous fancies he did not flatter, he obtained the command of the army in the war againſt the Jews, of which we ſhall give an account in the ſequel. He carried on this war with equal courage and ability, when three ſudden revolutions ſmoothed

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the way for an enterprise, which he could not have formed but with anxious apprehension, or rather which was formed by other people. The pretended oracles which promised him the empire, and the sacrilegious application of the prophecies concerning our Saviour, which was made to him by Josephus, ought to be reckoned either political stratagems, the artifices of flattery, or the dreams of superstitious credulity.

Oracles in his favour.

The legions which served in the East, being jealous at seeing every thing disposed of by the others, wanted in their turn to choose an emperour; and Vespasian was persuaded by Mucianus, governour of Syria, to seize this opportunity. Being proclaimed by his soldiers in Egypt, Syria, and Judea, he was acknowledged all over the East. Mucianus began his march, and was preceded by Antonius Primus, with the armies of Mæsia, Pannonia, and Dalmatia. Till he was roused by the noise of war, Vitellius did not wake from his lethargy, when he immediately ordered his generals Cecina and Valens to oppose the enemy; but the first of them was a traitor, and the other a debauchée, whose retinue was a perfect seraglio. Primus gained a battle at the gates of Cremona, which was followed by the taking of the town, when he delivered it up to be plundered, without mercy, by his soldiers, and afterwards reduced to ashes.

Vespasian chosen emperour in the East.

Battle & taking of Cremona.

Vespasian every where met with the readiest submission, of which the weak Vitellius either was ignorant himself, or wanted to keep the people in ignorance. He continued to live as if the country had been in perfect tranquillity, without abating either in his debaucheries or luxury, lavishly granting privileges and immunities for money, and dissipating his wealth in procuring disgraceful and pernicious pleasures. However, as the danger became pressing, and the soldiers called loudly for the emperour, he went to the camp; but that only served to make him more contemptible; and he very soon quitted it in a panic, which deprived him of all reflection. The inhabitants of Rome, rather affected at sight of his humiliation than from attachment to his person,

Stupidity of Vitellius in time of danger.

perſon, teſtified great anxiety to ſerve him; but he knew not how to profit by it.

He concludes a ſhameful treaty to ſave his life.

Primus paſſed the Appenines in the month of December, without meetng any obſtruction but what was preſented to him by nature. The emperour being reduced to the neceſſity of dying or reſigning, he choſe the part beſt ſuited to his imbecility, and accepted ſuch terms as were dictated to him by Flavius Sabinus, prefect of Rome, and eldeſt brother of Veſpaſian; obliging himſelf to reſign the empire for a conſiderable penſion, with the liberty of ending his days in peace in the country of Campania. Having concluded the treaty, he went to read it to the people; and, after recommending all his family to them, with tears in his eyes, gave up his ſword, and wanted to ſtrip himſelf of every badge of authority. This melancholy ſpectacle ſoftened the hearts of the people, and rouſed them to oppoſe it; they prevented him from executing his purpoſe, and compelled him to return to his palace. Sabinus was attacked; and, having loſt ſome of his ſoldiers, retired to the Capitol, where he was beſieged by the German cohorts, who ſet fire to the gates. The temple of Jupiter was conſumed; and Sabinus, being taken priſoner, was dragged to the feet of Vitellius, where he was cut in pieces, notwithſtanding the efforts of the emperour to ſoften the enraged ſoldiery.

Strips himſelf of every badge of authority.

The people oppoſe it. Dreadful ſedition.

Rome taken by Primus, Veſpaſian's general.

All hopes of conciliatory meaſures were then at an end. Primus arrived, and, carrying all before him, took poſſeſſion of the city, while they were celebrating the fooliſh licentious feſtival of the *Saturnalia*. Tacitus tells us, that all the ſlaughter and horrours of this action did not put a ſtop to the amuſements of the people. This anecdote ſerves to give an idea of the Romans in their diſgraceful humiliation, when debaſed by univerſal corruption. Vitellius, being ſurpriſed in the cell of a ſlave, where he had concealed himſelf, became the ſport of thoſe very people who had ſhewn ſuch a zealous attachment to him a little before. With a rope about his neck, his hands tied behind him, and his robe diſgrace-

Tragical death of Vitellius,

fully

fully torn, he was brought into the forum as a wicked criminal. He was loaded with reproaches, beſpattered with dirt, and put to death by a thouſand torments; after which, his head was fixed upon a lance, and his body dragged with a hook into the Tiber. What a death for an emperour! Thus we ſee, that even in the moſt poliſhed nations, when licentiouſneſs has thrown down all regard for laws and morals, ſpectacles are ſometimes preſented to our view, which we could not think poſſible in ages of the greateſt barbarity.

VESPASIAN.

Remarkable Government of Veſpaſian.

War of Judea, and Taking of Jeruſalem.

VESPASIAN, though abſent, was acknowledged emperour; Mucianus, who flattered himſelf that it was by his means, exerciſed the whole authority at Rome, and for ſome time this unfortunate city experienced all the cruelties which uſually follow conqueſt. Primus, to whom Veſpaſian was really indebted for his ſucceſs, was an object of jealouſy in the eyes of the haughty Mucianus, and no longer interfered in public affairs, for in courts merit without intereſt vaniſhes in an inſtant. 69. Veſpaſian acknowledged emperour.

The emperour was waiting in Alexandria for a fair wind to bring him to Rome. The Alexandrians, having declared in his favour from the beginning, expected conſiderable gratifications, but were diſguſted by his economy, which had a tincture of avarice; however, two pretended miracles, mentioned by Tacitus on the authority of living witneſſes, put a ſtop to their murmurs. Two men, the one blind and the other lame, being inſpired by the god Serapis, entreated him to anoint the eyes of the one with his ſpittle, and to preſs the hand of the other with his foot. After ſome reluctance, he conſented, and the patients were cured. Miracles aſcribed to him in Alexandria.

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Explanation of this fact.

The miracles of falſe religion are commonly aſcribed to the interpoſition of the devil, as if knavery, falſehood, and credulity, could not furniſh a more probable explanation. Veſpaſian either ſuffered himſelf to be deceived, or was pleaſed to deceive others. The evidences mentioned by Tacitus might have been of that kind of men who are always ſurrounded by wonders, and vouch for them as if they had been eye witneſſes. Hiſtory affords examples of them in abundance. But ought not the true religion, whoſe miracles are ſtamped with the ſeal of divine teſtimony, to reject all the fables of ſuperſtition and impoſture?

70. His good adminiſtration.

A prodigy of a different kind was to ſee Rome, after having been, under the tyranny of ſeven monſters, drenched in blood, at laſt under the authority of an emperour who was worthy of that name; and Veſpaſian, who had formerly been the mean flatterer of tyrants, make himſelf eſteemed and reſpected for every princely quality. Modeſt, induſtrious, and conſtantly attentive to the cares of government, he endeavoured to reſtore that order in the management of public affairs, which had been ſubverted by tyranny and diſcord. Without flattering their paſſions, he reſtored diſcipline in the army; recovered the ancient luſtre of the ſenate by diſcarding unworthy members, and giving it a ſhare in the adminiſtration; put an end to very great evils, by the prudent adminiſtration of juſtice; by example, which has greater influence than the laws, checked the luxury which prevailed at their tables; and corrected licentious manners by prudent regulations. Without either pride or haughtineſs, he ſhewed his ſovereignty in nothing ſo much as in labouring for the good of the public; and it is by ſuch conduct that a monarch deſerves his power.

He has been accuſed of avarice & extortion.

Yet he has been cenſured for a paſſion which even diſgraces private life; the love of money. He has likewiſe been charged with ſelling offices and pardons; with having increaſed the taxes, and employing ſevere, avaricious men in collecting the revenues, with a deſign

of

of ſqueezing them like ſponges, and condemning them when they had amaſſed conſiderable fortunes. His ſon Titus having diſapproved of a tax upon urine, the emperour preſented him with the firſt ſum which was collected from it, and aſked him, *if the money had a bad ſmell?* The apologiſts for his conduct vindicated him by ſaying, that he was compelled to it from the neceſſity of the times, for the finances were entirely exhauſted; and alledged the excellent uſes to which he dedicated his revenues, in adorning the city, mending highways, relieving the neceſſitous, reſtoring the fortunes of decayed ſenators, and beſtowing ſplendid rewards upon men of learning and ingenious artiſts. But it is impoſſible to vindicate odious exactions, which rather reſemble the extortions of a tax gatherer than the impoſts of a prince. It was not neceſſary to aſſign a penſion of a hundred thouſand ſeſterces* to the profeſſors of eloquence, nor to beſtow a reward of five hundred thouſand ſeſterces† upon a poet, as was done by Veſpaſian. No impoſts ſhould be levied upon the people but what the neceſſities of the ſtate require.

The uſes which he made of his money.

This prince, though ſo liberal to poets and orators, baniſhed philoſophers, as enemies of monarchy. It muſt be owned, that under the maſk of ſtoiciſm, a number run into blamable exceſſes. Demetrius, a Cynic, had the inſolence to continue in Rome, and even to come into the emperour's preſence, without ſhewing the leaſt token of reſpect. Veſpaſian ſent him the following meſſage—*You do what you can to provoke me to put you to death, but I do not kill every dog that barks.*

He baniſhed philoſophers as enemies of monarchy.

However, he baniſhed Helvidius Priſcus, the ſon in law and imitator of the virtues of Thraſea, whoſe only crime was a love of liberty too zealous to be indulged under a monarch. He behaved with more generoſity to Metius Pompotianus, who had been repreſented to him as a dangerous rival; he raiſed him to the conſulſhip,

Baniſhment of Helvidius Priſcus.

* 807*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.* † 4036*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.* Engliſh.

ſhip, ſaying—*If he becomes emperour he will remember my kindneſſes.*

Rebellion of the Batavi and Gauls, ſuppreſſed.

Two important wars ended happily. The Batavi, led on by Civilis, one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed men of that country, had ſhaken off the Roman yoke. The Gauls, excited by their druids, and a deteſtation of ſlavery, likewiſe revolted; and their leader, Claſſicus, having aſſumed the badges of authority, preceded by lictors, compelled the legions to take the oath of allegiance to the Gallic empire. Seven legions were ſent to ſuppreſs the rebellion on the Rhine, which was too great a force to be reſiſted by a people divided among themſelves, and therefore the greateſt part of them readily ſubmitted; but Civilis continued ſteady, gaining ſeveral advantages, and ſuſtaining ſome loſſes, till he ſaw that the Batavi were tired of ſuch a dangerous war, and then ſubmitted to Cerialis, a man of abilities, ſometimes negligent, but almoſt always fortunate.

Claſſicus.

Civilis.

State of Judea.

The war againſt the Jews, the moſt famous which is recorded in hiſtory, was likewiſe ended this year. That people, who hated and deſpiſed every other nation as much as they were univerſally hated and deſpiſed, were in nothing reſpectable but their being the depoſitaries of revelation, which, however, did not prevent them from ſinking into the groſſeſt ſuperſtition; and were too weak and contemptible to act a diſtinguiſhed part in politics. When they were freed from a tedious captivity, they put themſelves under the government of their high prieſts. Pompey had ſubjected them to Rome, after having taken Jeruſalem, and put an end to the quarrel between the two brothers, Hyrcanus and Ariſtobulus, who contended for the principality. The cruel Herod, an adherent of Anthony, and afterwards protected by Auguſtus, for a long time bore the title of king; but the tyranny of his ſon Archelaus provoked Auguſtus, who baniſhed him, and reduced Judea into a Roman province.

Revolutions in that country.

Prejudices and enthuſiaſm of the Jews.

Frequent rebellions, chiefly occaſioned by fanaticiſm, brought the greateſt miſery upon the Jews. They believed that the whole world was to be ſubjected to them.

Not

Not knowing the true Meſſiah, who had been foretold by their prophets, and whoſe myſteries had been accompliſhed, they daily expected in his ſtead a deliverer worthy of their ſtupid prejudices; ſo that whoever pleaſed to preſent himſelf as ſuch, could eaſily kindle a rebellion. The Phariſees, reſting their power on a heap of ſuperſtitions, preſerved the fire of enthuſiaſm, and accuſed of idolatry all who did not concur in their opinions and religious ceremonies. They looked with horrour upon the ſtandards of the legions and the images of the emperours; and their prejudices and national character contributed equally to light up a flame in Judea upon the ſlighteſt occaſion.

Siege of Jeruſalem.

Nero ſent Veſpaſian to reduce that rebellious people. He had completed the conqueſt of the whole kingdom except the capital, when, being proclaimed emperour, he followed where fortune led the way, leaving the war to be continued, and Jeruſalem taken, by his eldeſt ſon Titus. The ruin of that unfortunate city was more owing to the Jews than to the Romans. The Jews, divided among themſelves, and inflamed with inveterate hatred againſt one another, became their own executioners. The moſt prudent among them were deſirous to ſubmit; but a mad faction, who took the name of *Zealots*, obſtinately perſiſted, and tyranniſed over their own people at the very time that they were provoking the vengeance of the enemy. The city was filled with an innumerable multitude, and rivers of blood were perpetually flowing from their internal diſſenſions. The Zealots even formed different parties among themſelves, and ſhewed greater inveteracy againſt one another than againſt the Romans: to complete all theſe horrours, they were afflicted by a dreadful famine, in which every thing ſerved for food, and a mother was known to kill her own ſon in order to devour him. The fanatics, reſting their faith upon falſe prophets, bid defiance to every ſuffering, danger, and death. Titus, having fruitleſsly employed every gentle means to prevail with them to ſurrender, at laſt took the place by ſtorm. The temple

Exceſs of the zealots

was given up to the flames, and Jeruſalem buried forever in ruins.

Remarks on the hiſtory of Joſephus.

The hiſtorian Joſephus, who had forſaken his countrymen to ſerve in the Roman army, reckons eleven hundred thouſand Jews to have periſhed in the courſe of this ſiege; but Suetonius and Cornelius Nepos leſſen the number almoſt one half. The hiſtory of Joſephus bears ſuch evident tokens of flattery, credulity and exaggeration, that we cannot help refuſing to give him credit upon many occaſions. Does the man who alledges that he propheſied Veſpaſian would be emperour, ſuppoſing that he was the perſon meant in the ancient oracles, deſerve to be reckoned among the number of good hiſtorians?

79. Veſpaſian's death.

Veſpaſian, when fifty nine years of age, ſick, and at the point of death, ſo much were the duties of ſovereignty impreſſed on his mind, attempted to get up in his bed, ſaying, *that an emperour ſhould die ſtanding*, and immediately expired. He was ſometimes ſo much above being affected with vulgar prejudices, that he uſed to laugh at ſuch as would have frightened other people. At ſight of a comet—*If this ſtar threatens any one*, ſaid he, *it muſt be the king of Parthia, who has long hair, and not I who am bald.* Notwithſtanding, he believed in aſtrology and divination.

Numbering the citizens. Old men.

The laſt time the citizens of Rome were numbered was under his reign. It is ſaid that there were eighty one people above a hundred years old, living between the Apennines and the river Po, of whom eight were above a hundred and thirty, and three of a hundred and forty. Theſe facts are greatly to be doubted; they were much more difficult to be aſcertained at that time than at preſent.

TITUS.

79. Titus ſacrifices his pleaſures to his duty.

AT the name of Titus we find a ſecret ſatisfaction riſing in our breaſt, becauſe the idea of a good prince is accompanied with that of public felicity. The ſole

ſole purpoſe of his reign was to diffuſe happineſs; and, far from ſuffering himſelf to be intoxicated by power, which generally gives a looſe to the paſſions, he ſacrificed his own inclinations the moment he found himſelf reſponſible for the welfare of the people. He diſmiſſed Berenice, daughter of Agrippa, king of the Jews, with whom he was diſtractedly in love; and diſmiſſed her only that he might not incur the cenſure of the Romans by marrying a foreigner. The pleaſures of his youth were abandoned for the duties of government; and the deſire of doing good became the emperour's ruling paſſion. *My friends, I have loſt a day*, ſaid he, upon recollecting that he had not marked it with any act of beneficence.

His beneficence.

The favours beſtowed upon the courtiers might have proved a burden to the people: the generoſity of Titus therefore would have been leſs admirable, had it not been joined with economy; and if, while he gave to a few, he had not been attentive to the intereſt of all. His maxim, that no ſubject ought to quit the preſence of his ſovereign in diſcontent, is only good in the mouth of a judicious prince, who knows when it is proper to grant, and when to refuſe, and can give a denial without provoking reſentment. He is commended for having confirmed without exception all the donations made by his predeceſſors; a proceeding, for which he might perhaps with reaſon be cenſured.

Generous economy.

It was doubtleſs neceſſary to entertain the people with public diverſions; and the ſtately amphitheatre built by Titus, with the ſhews there exhibited, were ſuited to the taſte of the Romans, and the grandeur of the empire. But the liberalities he beſtowed in the times of public calamity, after the celebrated eruption of Mount Veſuvius, and a dreadful fire in Rome, principally deſerved to conciliate the affection of the people.

He gave public ſhews, but relieved the people.

Titus, when he aſſumed the office of pontiff, declared, that in that quality he thought himſelf under an obligation to abſtain from ſtaining his hands with Roman blood; and accordingly he never ſhed a drop. He either pardoned criminals, or inflicted only gentle puniſhments.

He put no Roman citizen to death.

niſhments. The ſavage Domitian, his brother and his enemy, ſhared his favours. He made two patricians eat at his table, who had been convicted of a conſpiracy againſt him, and condemned to death by the ſenate. Informers were the only objects of his ſeverity, and he purged ſociety of that nuiſance.

81. His death. This great prince, who was ſtyled *the delight of mankind*, and whoſe virtues have made his exploits be forgotten, died at the age of forty, after a reign of two years; and left the empire to a monſter, under whoſe oppreſſion it was deſtined long to groan. Such is the deplorable fate of nations.

Dreadful eruption of Veſuvius. The principal event in this reign was the firſt eruption of Mount Veſuvius; in which two whole cities, Herculaneum and Pompeii, were buried under mountains of aſhes, which were afterwards hardened into a ſolid maſs by the melted matter thrown out by the volcano.

Pliny, the naturaliſt. Pliny, the naturaliſt, who then commanded the fleet at Miſenum, was deſirous of obſerving this dreadful phenomenon nearer; and his curioſity coſt him his life. No man ever ſhewed a greater paſſion for ſtudy than he; at table, in the bath, on a journey, and even in the ſtreets of Rome, it employed his attention. Not to mention his original works, he left behind him a hundred and ſixty port folios, filled with extracts from various authors which he had peruſed. Being perſuaded that ſome utility may be drawn from the worſt books, there were none which he did not read, or cauſe to be read to him. Accordingly, in the immenſity of matter contained in his natural hiſtory, the critics have found ample ſubject for exerciſing their talents. Human life would not be ſufficient for the examination of ſuch a variety.

DOMITIAN.

81. Domitian, a mixture of folly & cruelty. IN Domitian, brother of Titus, the bad qualities of Caligula and Nero were united. Cruelty and folly were his characteriſtics. In his chamber he amuſed himſelf

himſelf with killing flies; and to him it was equally a matter of diverſion to kill men. He aſſumed the title of *God*, while he abandoned himſelf to the moſt infamous vices; and affected all the military honours, though he only gave marks of the moſt ſhameful cowardice. He promulgated ſome good laws; among others, one prohibiting the making of eunuchs; and ſometimes did juſt and generous actions; but a few inſtances of diſſembled virtue ſerved only to make his vices appear more horrid.

Inſtance of his malicious diſpoſition.

We may judge of his heart by the barbarous pleaſure he once took of aſſembling the principal ſenators and knights in a hall hung with black, obliging them to dine amidſt all the horrours of death, and diſmiſſing them in dreadful expectation of becoming the victims of his cruelty. After having ſufficiently diverted himſelf with their fears, he conſoled them with preſents.

He encouragers and rewards informers.

An inſurrection in Germany, which was ſoon quelled, furniſhed the tyrant with an opportunity of giving full vent to his cruelty. Then, if we may believe Tacitus, birth, riches, honours, and above all, virtues, were converted into crimes. The rewards beſtowed upon informers appeared in as odious a light even as their malice; conſulſhips, prieſthoods, and the moſt lucrative governments, were laviſhed upon thoſe execrable monſters. Slaves were bribed to give evidence againſt their maſters; and, in caſes of neceſſity, friends ſupplied the place of enemies. Men of the greateſt worth were executed on a charge of high treaſon; the ſenate was their judge, that is, the involuntary inſtrument of tyranny.

He baniſhes the philoſophers, &c.

That no trace of virtue might be left, all the philoſophers were baniſhed. The two moſt celebrated among them, Dion Chryſoſtom and Epictetus, quitted the city without having wherewith to ſubſiſt. The emperour did not even ſpare the fine arts and eloquence, which were leſs calculated for giving him umbrage. In a word, continues Tacitus, a horrid inquiſition ſhut all ears and mouths; and people would have loſt their memory with their ſpeech, had it been as much in their power to forget

Univerſal conſternation.

get as it was to be ſilent. The Chriſtians ſuffered a perſecution, but upon what motives it was raiſed is not known, profane hiſtorians confounding them with the Jews.

96. Domitian aſſaſſinated. Dread, the conſtant attendant of guilt, ceaſed not to haunt Domitian, till he underwent the common fate of tyrants. A conſpiracy was formed againſt him, even within the walls of his palace; and the empreſs directed the plot, which ſucceeded. The tyrant was aſſaſſinated; the ſenate ordered his ſtatues to be thrown down, and the army wanted to deify him, becauſe he had loaded them with favours.

Agricola diſtinguiſhed under this reign. Agricola, father in law of the hiſtorian Tacitus, one of the greateſt men of his age, reflected honour upon this reign, by his conduct and exploits in Great Britain, of which he had been made governour by Veſpaſian. By a ſteady adherence to the rules of ſound policy and virtue, an intrepid courage, and admirable prudence, he ſecured ſucceſs in all his enterpriſes. He ſtrengthened the Roman dominion over that part of the iſland which was already conquered, by governing with humanity and juſtice, and ſoftening the ſavage manners of the people, by the introduction of arts and the conveniences of life. He puſhed on his conqueſts during ſeven ſucceſſive campaigns; and, having defeated the Caledonians, a people in the north of Scotland, would have ſubdued the whole iſland, had he not been recalled by Domitian, who was jealous of his glory. Agricola, by a conduct uniformly modeſt, circumſpect, and reſerved, found means to eſcape the misfortunes to which virtue and ſuperiour merit were then expoſed. He died in peace, and, from motives of policy, made the emperour joint heir with his wife and daughter. Domitian's vanity was flattered by this bequeſt, which he took for a mark of eſteem. *He was ſo corrupted and blinded by flattery*, ſays Tacitus, *as not to reflect, that a good father never makes a good prince his heir.*

His will.

Account of Apollonius Tyanæus. We ſhall finiſh this article with a brief account of Apollonius Tyanæus, the celebrated Pythagorean, who

played

played a diſtinguiſted part under the preceding emperours, and whom the enemies of Chriſtianity have audaciouſly compared to Jeſus Chriſt, taking for truth the fables related in his honour by Philoſtratus, from the papers of one Damis, a weak man, who was a diſciple of that philoſopher. In fact, he was only an enthuſiaſt, bold, zealous, auſtere, vain, and capable of impoſing on the ſimple by pretended propheſies and miracles. After having viſited India and Arabia, he came to Rome in the time of Nero, *to ſee*, as he expreſſed himſelf, *what kind of beaſt a tyrant was.*

His advice to Veſpaſian.

At Alexandria he had ſeveral interviews with Veſpaſian, to whom he gave ſome excellent advices, particularly the following—*Do not enrich yourſelf by burdening the people with taxes: gold purchaſed by the tears of your ſubjects would be fatal and pernicious. The beſt uſe you can make of riches is to relieve the miſerable, and preſerve to the wealthy their lawful poſſeſſions. Make the law your rule, and you will eſtabliſh good regulations if you be the firſt to ſubmit to them.*

Accuſed at Rome.

In the reign of Domitian, being accuſed by the philoſopher Euphrates of magic and rebellion, he had the courage to come to Rome, and it is pretended ſpoke to the tyrant with the greateſt freedom, without being puniſhed for it. The writer of his life aſſures us, that he informed the people at Epheſus of the death of Domitian the day that he was aſſaſſinated.

His death

To complete his impoſtures, Apollonius reſolved to conceal his death from mankind; he diſappeared on a ſudden; and it was given out that he had aſcended into heaven. The hiſtory of his life is the ſtrongeſt refutation of his pretenſions: we there find abſurdities which clearly demonſtrate the impoſture: but credulous and prejudiced minds are not ſtartled at abſurdities; and while paganiſm ſubſiſted, Apollonius had the reputation of a man peculiarly favoured by heaven. He was born about the beginning of the Chriſtian era.

Abſurdity of his hiſtory.

NERVA.

NERVA.

96. Nerva a virtuous but weak emperour.

NERVA, whom the conſpirators made choice of to ſucceed Domitian, was a venerable old man, of conſummate virtue, but timid and weak, either from character, or the effects of old age. Though he governed with gentleneſs, juſtice, and even puniſhed the informers of the preceding reign, yet in all theſe he ſhewed himſelf too ſuſceptible of impreſſions from other people. In his conduct he always gave more marks of pliancy than firmneſs, which made a man of conſular rank ſay—*It is a misfortune to be ruled by a prince under whom nothing is permitted to any; it is likewiſe a misfortune, when all things are permitted to all.* However, Tacitus commends Nerva for having found means of reconciling two things, before deemed incompatible, ſovereignty and liberty. A good prince, though he may have ſome blemiſhes, is always entitled to the homage of good ſubjects.

The pretorian guards inſult his weakneſs, and he adopts Trajan.

The pretorian guards, who could with difficulty be reſtrained by ſevere diſcipline, ſoon inſulted the weakneſs of the government. They mutinied, and demanded that the murderers of Domitian ſhould be delivered up to them, nor could they be appeaſed by the entreaties or remonſtrances of the emperour; they beheld him, without emotion, preſent his throat to their ſwords, and forced him to comply with their pleaſure. After this, Nerva, in order to ſecure himſelf, and at the ſame time provide a ſupport for the empire, adopted Trajan, of all men the moſt worthy of being the ſovereign of the world. He was then carrying on a war in Pannonia, without the moſt diſtant thoughts of his elevation to ſo high a rank. Trajan governed ſome months in the emperour's name; and had he not been choſen ſucceſſor, the death of Nerva would have been a great misfortune to the empire.

TRAJAN.

TRAJAN.

TRAJAN, a native of Spain, and ſon of a perſon of conſular dignity, was maſter of every accompliſhment except learning, the want of which he made up for by his eſteem for learned men. A ſingle anecdote will be ſufficient to ſhew his principles. On preſenting a new captain of the pretorian guards with a ſword, as the badge of inveſtiture—*Uſe this for me*, ſaid the emperour, *if I govern well; if not, employ it againſt me*. Looking on himſelf as the head, not the maſter, of the ſtate, he took an oath to obſerve the laws: the only mark of diſtinction between him and the ſenators, was his ſuperiour aſſiduity and application to buſineſs; and he lived among his ſubjects like a father, whoſe only aim is to promote the happineſs of his children.—*Such as I wiſhed the emperours would be to me when I was a private perſon, ſuch do I wiſh to be to private perſons now I am emperour*. This was his maxim; by it he regulated his conduct; and his reign was the reign of juſtice and beneficence.

98. Trajan governs with the moderation of the head of a republic.

An excellent maxim.

He entirely cleared Rome of thoſe execrable informers who converted every innocent action into a crime. As accuſations were authorized by law, there being no public officer appointed for the proſecution of criminals, he increaſed the ſeverity of the puniſhments inflicted on calumniators. One of his principal cares was to prevent the extortions of which the collectors of the revenue were guilty under pretence of zeal for the emperour's intereſt. *The Exchequer*, ſays Pliny, *whoſe cauſe is never bad but under a good prince, was often nonſuited*. A prudent economy and inexhauſtible treaſure enabled the emperour to leſſen the taxes without impoveriſhing the revenue.

Informers checked.

Economy and the diminution of the impoſts.

So well calculated was his example for the reformation of diſorders, that the people of their own accord demanded the expulſion of the pantomimes, whom they had conſtrained Nerva to recall; ſuch influence has a wiſe

Pantomimes driven from Rome, & recalled.

wiſe prince, who is the object of love and veneration to his ſubjects, over the manners of the public, which often refuſe to bend to the laws. However, he afterwards reſtored the pantomimes, as the people could not long bear the want of that entertainment.

Title of *Optimus* given to Trajan.

Domitian had aſſumed the title of *God:* the Romans conferred upon Trajan that of *Optimus* [moſt excellent] which he deſerved the more, by ſubjoining to the prayers annually offered up for his proſperity, this expreſs condition—*If he governs in a manner calculated to promote public and private happineſs.*

The Daci, who had made the Romans tributary, ſubdued.

Nor was he inſenſible to military glory; equally qualified for the field and the cabinet, he had an opportunity of ſignalizing himſelf in the career of heroes. The Daci, under their king Decebalus, had made themſelves formidable to Domitian; who, after marching againſt them from a motive of oſtentation, ſubmitted to become their tributary. Trajan was deſirous of wiping out this ſtain on the Roman name; and the Dacian monarch ſoon furniſhed him with reaſons for renewing the war; in conſequence of which, he refuſed the tribute, put himſelf at the head of an army, defeated the Daci, and forced them to ſubmit to humiliating terms of peace. The faithleſs conduct of Decebalus obliged him to undertake another expedition; and, being reſolved to make an entire conqueſt of the country, which bordered on Thrace and Mæſia, he built the famous

Bridge over the Danube.

bridge over the Danube, which however was much inferiour to the idea given of it by Dion Caſſius (as has been proved by count Marſigli). Decebalus was defeated, and laid violent hands on himſelf; and Dacia became a Roman province, comprehending part of Hungary, Tranſilvania, Walachia, and Moldavia. Tra-

Trajan's pillar.

jan's pillar, which is ſtill ſtanding, is a glorious monument of his triumph over thoſe enemies of the empire.

Fruitleſs conqueſts in Aſia.

Trajan would be more an object of admiration, had he not ſuffered himſelf to be hurried away by a dangerous paſſion for conqueſt. Having paſſed into Aſia upon ſome ſubject of complaint given him by Choſroes, king of Parthia,

Parthia, he ſpent ſeveral years in a war, of which ſcarce any intereſting particulars have come to our knowledge; conquered Armenia, Meſopotamia and Aſſyria; croſſed the Perſian gulf, and advanced to the ocean; where he cried out, with the ardour of an Alexander, *If I were younger, I would carry the war into India.* But being ſeized by a diſtemper, he was obliged to take the road to Rome, leaving the command to Adrian, who could not keep any of his acquiſitions. Permanent conqueſts are ſometimes hurtful, becauſe they coſt too dear, or ſtir up too many enemies: What then muſt thoſe be which cannot be preſerved?

Trajan ended his life in Cilicia, after a reign of nineteen years. He is accuſed of having been too fond of wine; and, it is ſaid, forbid any orders to be executed which he ſhould give after being long at table. He is likewiſe charged with being addicted to unnatural pleaſures. It is an amazing prodigy, that the weakneſſes of the man did not injure the duties of the monarch. 117. He dies in Cilicia.

Is it poſſible that ſuch a prince, whoſe clemency deſerves ſo high encomiums, can be looked upon as a perſecutor of the Chriſtians? It is true ſeveral martyrs are reckoned up who ſuffered in his reign. But popular commotions, the prejudices of the magiſtrates, the hatred entertained againſt the Jews, who were always ready to rebel, the idea of Judaiſm affixed to the new religion, the ſeverity of the laws, which prohibited the introduction of foreign rites, the aſſemblies of the faithful taxed with ſacrilegious rebellion; all theſe concurring cauſes occaſioned blood to be ſpilt in ſeveral provinces, though no general edict had been publiſhed againſt them. The letter of Pliny, governor of Bithynia, and Trajan's anſwer, with regard to the manner in which they were to be treated, are univerſally known. Pliny, charging them only with fooliſh ſuperſtitions, and atteſting the goodneſs of their morals, conſults the emperour, and lays before him the gentle methods he had followed, aſſuring him that numbers of Chriſtians might be brought back to the eſtabliſhed religion, if a door

Whether Trajan perſecuted the Chriſtians.

Pliny's letter in their favour.

door was opened for repentance. Trajan approves his conduct; adding, that he is not to ſearch after the Chriſtians, but that if any of them are brought before his tribunal, and convicted, they are to be puniſhed; a deciſion which has been ſeverely cenſured. The fact is, that Trajan and Pliny, being unacquainted with the purity of the Chriſtian religion, which was gaining ground every day, were deſirous of ſtopping its progreſs, but with as little effuſion of blood as poſſible.

Pliny, Tacitus, Juvenal & Plutarch.

Pliny the younger, adopted ſon and nephew of the naturaliſt, was one of the ornaments of this excellent reign, as well as his friend Tacitus, both leſs diſtinguiſhed by the honours of the conſulſhip than by their probity, their talents, and their works. *Happy times*, ſays Tacitus, *when men might think what they would, and ſpeak what they thought.* To this liberty, which, when kept within proper bounds, is ſo favourable to genius, we owe the maſter pieces of the hiſtorian, and the excellent ſentiments which animate the works of the orator. At that time, too, Juvenal wrote his ſatires, in which vice is attacked with great vehemence; but they are deſtitute of the affecting graces of virtue. Trajan entertained a friendſhip for the philoſophic Plutarch, whom he made conſul. That author has converted hiſtory into a ſchool of morality; and, on that account, deſerves the higheſt encomiums.

ADRIAN.

117. Adrian proclaimed by the army.

THE ſole claim which Adrian had to the empire was a deed of adoption, probably forged, ſince it was ſigned only by Plotina, the wife of Trajan, who, though he was his near relation, did not love him. Having got himſelf proclaimed by his ſoldiers, at Antioch, he wrote to the ſenate to make an apology for having yielded to the zeal of the army, and preventing them from the exerciſe of their power. Such a political ſtratagem ſhewed that he was an ambitious man, more

anxious

anxious to get poſſeſſion of the ſovereignty, than to gain a fair reputation. The fine expreſſions which he frequently repeated—*I ſhall govern the republic as the property of the people, not my own*, only prove that he knew how to borrow the language of virtue. Though Adrian had a conſiderable ſhare of abilities and knowledge, his conduct was equivocal, where the bad, mixed with the good, occaſioned the motives of his actions to be doubted. Though we may miſtake them, his government, in many reſpects, is no leſs deſerving of praiſe.

His equivocal conduct.

After the examples of Trajan, Nerva, and Titus, he at firſt promiſed that no ſenator ſhould be put to death. However, four perſons of conſular dignity were executed on account of a conſpiracy. He declared that it was againſt his inclination, but he was not believed. The conqueſts of Trajan being abandoned, the bridge over the Danube deſtroyed, on pretence of preventing the incurſions of the barbarians, and the purchaſing a peace with the Samaritans and Roxalani (inhabitants of Poland) by paying them ſubſidies, may appear at the beginning of a reign as proofs of cowardice; but, however, public tranquillity was a great happineſs for the republic. Adrian relieved the people by giving them a full diſcharge of all their debts to the exchequer, which were ſaid to amount to no leſs a ſum than nine hundred millions of ſeſterces*; and likewiſe diſtributed ſums of money to every citizen. He effaced every unfavourable impreſſion which had been conceived againſt him, by the condeſcending attention he ſhewed to the ſenate, and by appearing modeſt, affable, and deſirous of gaining the good will of the people. He even forgave injuries; and when he had got a perſon in his power who had reaſon to dread his reſentment, ſaid to him—*Now you are ſafe.*

He abandons Trajan's conqueſts, & prefers living in peace.

His ſeeming good qualities.

This clemency proceeded probably either from policy or vanity, ſince it was not conſiſtent with his actions on many occaſions. The emperour, being jealous of merit, ſuſpicious and diſtruſtful, became unjuſt to his beſt friends.

He becomes unjuſt.

* About 7,856,250*l.* Engliſh.

Similis retires.

friends. Similis, captain of the pretorian guards, being warned by the fate of others, prevented his diſgrace, by procuring leave to retire while he was in favour. After ſeven years peaceable retreat in the country, he ended his life; and on his death bed compoſed the following very philoſophical epitaph, which he gave orders to be inſcribed upon his monument—*Here lies Similis, who paſſed ſeventy ſix years in the world, and lived only ſeven.* For a common courtier, theſe would have been ſeven years of death.

Adrian makes ſome good laws.

Some excellent edicts, which were paſſed by Adrian, entitled him to the honourable appellation of legiſlator. He deprived maſters of the power of life and death over their ſlaves; he affixed ſome important limitations to that inhuman law which put to death all the ſlaves of a maſter who had been aſſaſſinated; in a word, he begun to re-eſtabliſh the ineſtimable rights of nature.

His perpetual edict.

He made a collection of the beſt deciſions from all the annual edicts of the ancient pretors, in which the interpretations of the laws had been too variable; and compoſed a perpetual edict to ſerve as a permanent law.

He cauſes juſtice to be faithfully adminiſtered.

He was chiefly attentive to the faithful adminiſtration of juſtice, and the behaviour of governours and magiſtrates in the provinces; objects of the greateſt importance in ſuch extended dominions, where, by their remote ſituation, injuſtice conceals itſelf from the obſervation of the ſovereign, notwithſtanding the utmoſt vigilance.

He ſupports military diſcipline.

The ſame attention was paid to preſerve diſcipline in the army, by the prince himſelf ſetting the example: he marched on foot, like Trajan, clothed in heavy armour. Exact without paying a ſcrupulous attention to trifles, ſtrict without ſeverity, and generous without profuſion, he was adored by the army, while he required the moſt perfect ſubordination. Peace and ſafety were the produce of his attention.

He makes the tour of the empire.

Some long journies which he took from motives of curioſity and political zeal, far from injuring his authority, procured him an opportunity of ſeeing the ſtate of

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the provinces with his own eyes, and reforming abuſes on the ſpot. With this view he made an excurſion over the whole extent of his vaſt empire. He built a wall in Great Britain, which reached from the mouth of the river Tyne, acroſs the country, to Solway Firth, to protect the ſouthern part of the iſland from incurſions; and his preſence was every where uſeful.

His letter concerning the Egyptians, Jews, and Chriſtians.

A letter which he wrote while he was in Alexandria conveys an idea of the wretched ſtate in which Egypt was at that time. He ſays, that nothing was to be found there but levity, caprice, and ingratitude. According to his account, the Jews and Chriſtians in that city worſhipped no other God but their intereſt. The morals of many Chriſtians had undoubtedly been greatly depraved by commerce, and the riches of Alexandria. The true diſciples of the goſpel were but little known.

134. Revolt of the Jews.

As to the Jews, they continued as fanatical, ſeditious and rebellious as ever; the evils which they had experienced making them only more intractable. A temple, which was erected to Jupiter in Jeruſalem, revived their hatred againſt the Romans, with which they were tranſported to a degree of madneſs. There was a worthleſs robber of the name of Barcochebas, who called himſelf the Meſſiah, and perſuaded numbers to follow him. They ranged themſelves under his ſtandard, and the rebellion roſe to ſuch a head, that Adrian recalled Julius Severus, an excellent general, from Great Britain, to ſend him into Judea. The puniſhment of the rebels kept pace with their ſavage fanaticiſm; and five hundred and eighty thouſand Jews were ſuppoſed to have periſhed in three campaigns; the reſt were ſold and tranſported to other countries. They were forbidden to ſet foot again in Jeruſalem, which the emperour rebuilt under the name of Ælia Capitolina. Their deſcendants, who have been ſcattered over the whole world, have unceaſingly deteſted all other nations, to whom they have always been an object of contempt and inſult.

They are deſtroyed, or diſperſed.

Adrian, dying, adopts Antoninus.

A languiſhing diſorder, with which Adrian was ſeized, ſoured his temper, and made him guilty of ſome acts of cruelty

cruelty in which he put to death a number of illuſtrious perſonages. Having no children, he adopted Verus, whoſe vicious life had made him contemptible; but happily he did not long enjoy his good fortune, when the adoption of Antoninus wiped away the diſgrace of the
138. firſt choice. No man was more worthy of the throne; and he heſitated ſome time before he would conſent to accept it. Adrian wanted to lay violent hands upon himſelf, and demanded weapons or poiſon for that purpoſe; but Antoninus prevented his attendants from obeying him. After the death of the emperour, Antoninus with difficulty prevailed upon the ſenate, who were irritated againſt him, not to annul his edicts, and according to cuſtom to rank him among the gods.

Adrian jealous of literary men.

If Adrian's virtues were only affected, he deſerved however to be reckoned among the number of great princes, for he was the occaſion of great happineſs to the people. To deep ſkill in politics, he added a taſte for learning and the arts; but men of abilities, whom he admitted to his intimacy, found themſelves expoſed to his

Anecdote of Favorinus.

jealouſy, and the conſequences were hazardous. Favorinus the philoſopher, though apt to declare his ſentiments with freedom, one day gave up a diſpute about a point in grammar, in which the emperour was miſtaken. The friends of Favorinus blaming him for his condeſcenſion—*You are wrong*, ſaid he; *can the man who has thirty legions under his command be miſtaken?* His paſſion for the infamous Antinous, to whom he dedicated temples, ſufficiently proclaims the morals of Adrian.

Florus, Suetonius, Arrian, Epictetus.

Florus, Suetonius, and Arrian, the diſciple of Epictetus, a man of rank, and a hiſtorian greatly ſuperiour to the other two, flouriſhed during the reign of Adrian. From the time of Tacitus, the Roman hiſtory is nothing but a maſs of ill digeſted facts. The moral philoſophy of Epictetus is more valuable, whoſe doctrine was reduced to theſe two points—*Suffer with patience, and enjoy with moderation.* He practiſed what he taught, and his virtue was tried by misfortunes.

ANTONINUS.

ANTONINUS.

LET us figure to ourſelves the throne filled by a true philoſopher, adorned with every virtue, and free from every vice; dedicating his whole life to the public good; affecting no marks of ſuperiority; the father of his country, not by a bare title, which has often been proſtituted to the worſt of emperours, but by actions more honourable than all titles, and we ſhall have a proper idea of Antoninus, who was a native of Niſmes, and deſcended from an ancient family, though it had but lately riſen to eminence. Had his hiſtory been written by a Tacitus, his reign, which laſted twenty two years, would furniſh the moſt excellent leſſons of virtue and humanity: but we find only ſcattered anecdotes, of which it will be ſufficient to mention a few. 138. Virtues of Antoninus.

At the beginning of his reign, Antoninus gave a remarkable proof of his clemency by ſtopping all inquiry into a conſpiracy formed againſt him.—*How unfortunate for me*, cried he, *ſhould it be found that I am hated by a great number of my fellow citizens!* He was not only frugal of the revenue, but looked upon his own poſſeſſions as the property of the ſtate. His wife, Fauſtina, reproaching him with laviſhing his patrimony, in order to ſave the public money, he replied—*Since we attained to the empire, we have no longer any thing that we can call our own.* Theſe generous ſentiments did not prevent him from retrenching ſeveral penſions which had been granted on the treaſury, without any ſufficient reaſon.—*For*, ſaid he, *it is ſhameful and cruel to ſuffer the republic to be devoured by uſeleſs vermin.* So rational a ſyſtem of economy is unqueſtionably preferable to the exceſſive liberality of Titus. Some anecdotes which give a picture of his ſentiments. His fortune expended for the exigences of the ſtate. Penſions ſuppreſſed

Authors mention two wiſe regulations made by this prince; the firſt prohibiting any perſon who had been once acquitted, from being again tried for the ſame crime; the ſecond aboliſhing the cuſtom of conveying to the exchequer, or to other families, the ſucceſſion of Remarkable laws.

a father who was made free of the city of Rome, while his children remained denizens of their native country. Saint Auguſtine commends a third regulation by which a huſband, who proſecuted his wife for adultery, was ſubjected to the penalty in theſe caſes inflicted upon women, provided he was convicted of the ſame crime. But though the guilt be in itſelf equal on both ſides, the conſequences to ſociety are not ſo, and this diſtinction merits the attention of the legiſlator.

161. Death of the emperour.

Antoninus died univerſally regretted at the age of ſeventy three. During the life of his predeceſſor, he had adopted Marcus Aurelius and Verus; but, being a good judge of merit, he gave his daughter in marriage to the former, who deſerved his whole confidence, while Verus, being entirely addicted to pleaſure, was denied any ſhare in the adminiſtration; which was in fact naming his ſucceſſor. He made the name of Antoninus ſo reſpectable, that for near a century, the emperours aſſumed it as a title of honour, like that of Auguſtus; but few were capable of ſupporting it in its native luſtre.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

161. Marcus Aurelius and Verus elected by the ſenate.

FROM the time that Nerva and Trajan had reſtored the ſenate to ſome ſhare of its dignity, and put an end to the terrours of deſpotiſm, the armies ceaſed to be maſters of the empire, and the ſenate elected, or ſeemed to elect, the emperour as a firſt magiſtrate. We have ſeen Adrian acknowledge this right, which was but a feeble remain of the ancient liberty. Marcus Aurelius was proclaimed by the ſenators in conjunction with Verus, his brother by adoption, whom he generouſly made his colleague. After which they both proceeded to the camp of the pretorian guards, and promiſed them twenty thouſand ſeſterces* per man; for it would have been dangerous to withhold that gratuity, which was unhappily become an eſtabliſhed cuſtom. Thus

* 161*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.* ſterling.

Thus two princes ſhared the power, in order to exerciſe it in common; and the generoſity of Marcus Aurelius cannot be too greatly admired, if we conſider him only as ſacrificing his own advantage in ſo important a point. But the public good was in ſome degree made the victim of his private diſintereſtedneſs. Was it poſſible that ſuch a man as Verus, a ſlave to debauchery, deſtitute of virtue, and void of courage, ſhould be raiſed to the empire by the moſt virtuous of princes? Beneficence carried to exceſs is a fault, and it is the only one with which Marcus Aurelius can be charged. The firſt too generous to the other.

Hoping that war might diſentangle his colleague from the ſnares of pleaſure, he committed to him the care of humbling the Parthians, who had lately invaded Armenia, and defeated a Roman army. Verus ſet out, but ſtopped wherever he could find amuſement, and at laſt fixed his reſidence at Antioch; where, during the four years that the war laſted, he indulged himſelf in the loweſt and moſt diſgraceful pleaſures, while his generals were gaining victories for him. He returned decorated with pompous titles, but degraded by brutal vices, deſpiſing his brother's advice, and ready to ruin the ſtate in order to gratify his inclinations. It is ſaid that he ſpent ſix millions of ſeſterces* in one entertainment, though there were only twelve gueſts; the preſents which he made them in ſlaves, plate, and carriages, ſwelled the expenſe to this enormous ſum. 162. Exceſſes of Verus.

On the other hand, Marcus Aurelius verified Plato's ſaying—*The people will be happy when philoſophers are their kings, or their kings philoſophers.* In the ſenate he never domineered, but conſulted and followed its advices. No ſenator was more exact in attending the meetings; a ſtrict economiſt of the public money, he did not think that the ſoldiers ought to be rewarded to the prejudice of the people. After a victory, he ſaid to them, *Whatever ſhould be given you above what is your due, would be drawn from the blood of your parents and relations.* On a preſſing occaſion, when an augmentation Admirable conduct of Marcus Aurelius.

* 48,439*l.* 10*s.* ſterling.

tion of the taxes appeared abſolutely neceſſary, he ſold the moſt valuable furniture of the palace, declaring that he would repurchaſe thoſe effects from ſuch as ſhould be willing to part with them, rather than oppreſs the provinces.

He did not carry his philoſophy to too great extremes.

Though a model of every virtue, and zealous for the intereſts of morality, he never run into extremes, becauſe he was acquainted with the weakneſſes of human nature.—*Since it is not in our power to make men ſuch as we could wiſh them*, ſaid he, wiſely, *we muſt bear with them ſuch as they are, and draw from them all poſſible advantage*. An excellent maxim, which ought to teach enthuſiaſts the vanity of their ſyſtems of perfection. It was from this principle that Marcus Aurelius conformed to the taſte, or rather madneſs, of the Romans for public diverſions; and even the pantomimes, of which he gave ſome magnificent exhibitions, and honoured them with his preſence, though, during the repreſentation, his attention was employed on the affairs of ſtate.

He marches with Verus againſt the Germans.

Mean time ſeveral German nations, bordering on Pannonia and the Danube, the Quadi, Jazygæ, and above all the Marcomanni, threatening the frontiers of the empire, Marcus Aurelius marched againſt them accompanied by Verus; for experience had taught him, that this prince was neither capable of managing the affairs of government or a war, without oppreſſing the ſtate, or expoſing it to misfortune. But his uneaſineſs for the vices of Verus was ſoon ended by the ſudden death of that prince. Aurelius, unqueſtionably, felt no great grief upon the occaſion; but to ſuſpect, as has been done by ſome, that he ſhortened his colleague's days, is the height of abſurdity as well as malice. The only thing that could juſtly be objected againſt him is the apotheoſis of ſuch a man; but cuſtom had made this ridiculous ceremony ſacred.

169. Death of Verus.

War in Pannonia.

The emperour remained in Pannonia five years, and during that time underwent prodigious fatigues, which he could ſcarce bring his troops to endure by his own example. He gained a celebrated victory over the barbarians,

barians, which has been generally looked upon as an inſtance of the immediate protection of heaven. The Romans were ready to periſh for want of water, when a ſtorm roſe on a ſudden, which furniſhed them with rain, while it deſtroyed the enemies with hail and thunder. According to ſome eccleſiaſtical authors, the prayers of the *thundering* legion, which they ſay was entirely compoſed of Chriſtians, wrought this miracle; and Marcus Aurelius acknowledged it in a letter quoted by Tertullian. But as the truth of Chriſtianity doth not depend upon ſuch traditions, we ſhall not ſcruple to acknowledge, with thoſe excellent critics Pagi and Tillemont, &c. the uncertainty of a fact unſupported by any ſolid proofs. On the Antonine column we ſee a Jupiter Pluvius giving rain to the ſoldiers; but would Marcus Aurelius have confounded the God of the Chriſtians with Jupiter? Beſides it is certain that the thundering legion bore that name under Trajan, and therefore did not owe it to the gratitude of Marcus Aurelius. To conclude, his letter is no longer extant, and that which is aſcribed to him is evidently a forgery. The perſecution which the Chriſtians ſoon after ſuffered, may ſerve as an additional proof. *(Vid. Mem. de l'Acad. des Inſcr. t.* 18.*)*

Thundering legion. A doubtful miracle.

However formidable the Germans might be, they could not reſiſt the efforts of a numerous, well diſciplined army, invincible under the command of ſo great an emperour. They therefore ſolicited a peace, which they obtained, and were even permitted to eſtabliſh colonies in the provinces into which they had attempted to enter by force. That reſtleſs and inſatiable people only waited an opportunity of ſeizing upon the whole empire.

Peace granted to the Germans.

A more dangerous enemy roſe againſt Marcus Aurelius: this was Avidius Caſſius, a great captain, who affected the ſeverity of the ancient manners, was a ſtrict diſciplinarian, and, after having commanded with ſucceſs in a war againſt the Parthians, was employed to revive diſcipline among the Syrian legions. Under the maſk of republican zeal he concealed the moſt inſatiable ambition;

175. Revolt of Caſſius.

ambition; and, ſpreading a falſe report of the emperour's death, revolted, and cauſed himſelf to be proclaimed by his ſoldiers. Marcus Aurelius, who was then in Pannonia, upon receiving this news, only complained of his ingratitude, and ſhewed himſelf deſirous of victory only to pardon him. But he was not put to the neceſſity of coming to a battle: the rebel was aſſaſſinated by two of his officers, three months after his revolt. His family and accomplices experienced the emperour's clemency, as he doubtleſs would have done himſelf.

The emperour's exceſſive indulgence of his wife Fauſtina, and ſon Commodus.

This good prince, as we have already remarked, ſometimes committed faults from a too great mildneſs of diſpoſition, which bordered upon want of ſpirit. His wife Fauſtina was a ſecond Meſſalina, but inſtead of divorcing or obliging her to reform her conduct, he promoted the accomplices of her debaucheries; beſtowed on her a title, which had never been known before, ſtyling her *the mother of the camp and the armies*; cauſed divine honours to be paid to her after her deceaſe, and erected monuments to her memory. His paternal indulgence was carried to the ſame faulty exceſs; though his ſon Commodus was a monſter, yet, in order to ſecure him in the ſucceſſion, he conferred on him the tribunitial power, and cauſed him, by an unheard of innovation, to be declared Auguſtus. He afterwards drove from the palace thoſe abandoned miſcreants by whom the young prince was beſet; but recalled them upon his falling, or pretending to fall, into a diſtemper; and Commodus from that time gave the rein to his paſſions. The emperour had a ſon in law capable of governing, whom he might have adopted; his ſucceſſor was not fixed by the form of government, and his paternal affection ought to have given way to the good of the ſtate. No excuſe can be found for his conduct in this reſpect, unleſs we ſuppoſe that his tenderneſs threw a veil over his ſon's faults.

180. Death of Marcus Aurelius.

This emperour died in Pannonia, to which he had again marched to oppoſe the Marcomanni. His reign was that of true philoſophy, which forms men to the practice

practice of virtue, not to diſputation. "The ſect of "the Stoics," ſays Monteſquieu, "extended itſelf, and "gained credit in the empire. It would ſeem that hu- "man nature made an extraordinary effort to produce "this admirable ſect, which reſembled thoſe vigorous "plants that ſpring up ſpontaneouſly in places which "heaven never illuminated. . . . . We feel a "ſecret pleaſure in ſpeaking of that emperour. We "cannot read his life without being intereſted; and we "riſe from it with a better opinion of ourſelves, becauſe "it gives us a better opinion of mankind." The ſoul is elevated by the peruſal of the maxims written by Marcus Aurelius, as well as by the picture of his life. We there behold a royal philoſopher, impreſſed with the deepeſt ſenſe of his duties, breathing only the ſpirit of juſtice and humanity; deſpiſing all vain parade deſtitute of virtue, which is the true foundation of merit.

Stoicism flouriſhes.

The maxims of Marcus Aurelius.

Under ſuch a prince, moral philoſophy could not fail to flouriſh. But as every thing is abuſed, many perſons concealed their paſſions under the maſk of philoſophy, and by their hypocriſy inſinuated themſelves into the confidence of a real ſage. The ingenious Lucian turned into ridicule the falſe philoſophers, as well as the falſe gods. To him we are indebted for making us acquaint- ed with two celebrated impoſtors, Peregrinus and Alex- ander. The firſt, after a ſeries of crimes, turned Chriſ- tian, entered into orders, and was impriſoned at Rome, where he was revered by the profeſſors of that religion as a confeſſor and martyr. Being ſet at liberty, and af- terwards excommunicated, he played the part of a Cy- nic; inſulted every body; made himſelf an object of univerſal hatred and contempt; and at laſt burnt him- ſelf with great ſolemnity at the Olympic games, from an imagination that he ſhould make his name as great as that of Hercules. Alexander pretended to be a pro- phet: for twenty years he deceived the credulous mul- titude, and ſometimes even people of rank. He in- veighed with great acrimony againſt the Chriſtians and Epicureans, whom he repreſented as atheiſts becauſe they endeavoured to bring him into diſcredit. The

Impoſtors under the cloak of philoſophy.

Peregrinus and Alexander deſcribed by Lucian.

Celſus, Empiricus, Apuleius, Galen.

The principal philoſophers of this reign are Celſus, the mortal enemy of Chriſtianity, whoſe works have been refuted by Origen; Sextus Empiricus, who, by exaggerating the weakneſs of reaſon, ſunk into Pyrrhoniſm; Apuleius, an African, who was charged with being a magician, and by the Pagans has been compared to Jeſus Chriſt, as was Apollonius Tyanæus; to theſe we may add Galen, the reſtorer of the phyſical art, who by his merit gained the confidence and eſteem of Marcus Aurelius.

The Chriſtians perſecuted in Gaul.

We cannot attribute to this prince the violent perſecution ſuffered by the Chriſtians in Gaul, as he publiſhed no edict againſt them; and it is even aſſerted, that he forbid their being moleſted on account of their religion. But we will ſee that it was impoſſible to prevent thoſe ſtorms, if we conſider on one ſide the fanatic zeal of the people and magiſtrates, and on the other the open inſults offered to the eſtabliſhed religion, to which, perhaps, may be added, the mutual averſion ſubſiſting between the Chriſtians and philoſophers. Chriſtianity was emerging from obſcurity, becauſe among its profeſſors were writers zealous againſt paganiſm, miſſionaries indefatigable in their labours, and martyrs, whoſe conſtancy filled the public with admiration.

COMMODUS.

180. Commodus renders himſelf odious by his wickedneſs and tyranny.

AFTER ſome reigns that do honour to our nature, ſuch is the too common propenſity of human affairs to ſink into degeneracy, that we fall back into all the horrours of tyranny. A ſucceſſion of two or three virtuous princes is a prodigy, and almoſt all the reſt ſeem deſtined to exerciſe the patience of their ſubjects. Far from following the example of his father, Commodus had the taſte, and trod in the footſteps, of Nero. He terminated the war in Germany, by purchaſing a peace from the barbarians, and made a triumphal entry into Rome with one of his minions in the chariot. Govern-

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ed by worthleſs flatterers, and immerſed in ſhameful debauchery, he ſported with the lives of his ſubjects, and in a ſhort time made himſelf ſo deteſtable, that his own ſiſter, Lucilla, formed a conſpiracy againſt him. The day on which he was to have been aſſaſſinated, Quintianus, a young ſenator, who was to have ſtruck the firſt blow, drew forth his dagger, exclaiming—*The ſenate ſends you this*; but he was ſo ſlow in the execution, that he gave time for the guard to ſeize him, and the conſpiracy fell to the ground. Lucilla, with a number of people of diſtinction, was put to death. The emperour, ſtruck with the expreſſion made uſe of by Quintianus, conceived an averſion againſt the ſenate; and that illuſtrious body of men, who had been lately freed from ſlavery by the worthy princes that reigned immediately before Commodus, was oppreſſed more than ever.

Conſpiracy of his ſiſter.

Perennis, the captain of the pretorian guards, by ſubmitting to the moſt ſervile meanneſſes, and ſupplanting the miniſters appointed by Marcus Aurelius for his ſon, gained the confidence of Commodus, and governed the ſtate like a tyrant: but ſtill his ambition had a higher object in view, and he hoped to reach the throne by the deſtruction of his maſter. A Cynic philoſopher, mounting on the ſtage before a full aſſembly, and in preſence of the emperour, who aſſiſted at the games, boldly revealed the conſpiracy of Perennis. The favourite inſtantly cauſed the philoſopher to be hanged, but that did not prevent the prince from being intimidated; and his ſuſpicions were ſtrengthened by the enemies of the miniſter: proofs were found againſt him; he was declared an enemy to his country, and, being given up to the ſoldiers, was put to death. Cleander, a worthleſs freed man, next gained the ear of the prince to repeat the offences of his predeceſſor, and a violent ſedition was the conſequence. Commodus, who was equally timorous and cruel, cauſed his head to be cut off in his own preſence, as the only means of appeaſing the multitude.

Conſpiracy of Perennis diſcovered by a cynic.

A freed man, a worthleſs and odious miniſter.

The emperour, from that time perpetually tormented with fear and diſtruſt, deteſting men of merit, hearkening

Cruelty, debauchery, and meanneſs, of the emperour.

ing only to calumny, and committing continual murders, eſpecially on thoſe who had wealth to whet his avarice, cauſed his brother in law, his nephew, his couſin german, and ſix perſons of conſular dignity, to be all executed at once. At the ſame time he uſed his ſiſters in the moſt infamous manner; he plunged into every imaginable exceſs, while his greateſt ambition was to drive a chariot, and to diſtinguiſh himſelf among the gladiators. The glory of having defeated a thouſand in the courſe of his reign ſo far intoxicated his pride, that he aſſumed the title of the *Roman Hercules*.

192. The tyrant aſſaſſinated by his concubine.

This monſter, who was equally deſpiſed and deteſted, never once thought of taking the precaution of other tyrants, and gaining the favour of the people by donatives; but employed all his ſkill in corrupting the ſoldiers by permitting abominable licentiouſneſs. As he ſpared no body, every one of his domeſtics was an enemy. He had written a liſt of thoſe of his family whom he intended for his next ſacrifice, which was diſcovered by accident almoſt in the moment of execution. His concubine, Marcia, being among the number of the proſcribed, made haſte to anticipate his purpoſe; and having formed a conſpiracy againſt him, cauſed the tyrant to be poiſoned, and afterwards ſtrangled by a gladiator. The ſenate and people gave vent to their deteſtation of his memory. At thirty one years of age, he had exhauſted every ſpecies of villainy.

Degeneracy of the Romans.

The Romans muſt have been ſtrangely corrupted, when the reigns of ſeveral worthy emperours could not protect them from ſuch deteſtable tyranny. Is it poſſible to conceive, that a prince could be capable of giving himſelf up to ſuch exceſſes, as the hiſtory of barbarous nations cannot furniſh an example of, unleſs the extreme degeneracy of a ſervile people had deprived them of principles, morals, and ſentiment? It is always their fault when the intoxication of abſolute power overleaps every boundary: if there be any thing generous and maſculine in the public opinion, it is frequently ſufficient to make the laws reſpected. If virtue and courage be

the

the general characteriſtics, they ſtill preſerve their influence.

PERTINAX.——JULIUS DIDIANUS.

PERTINAX was in the decline of life, deſcended from an obſcure family, but had raiſed himſelf under Marcus Aurelius by his military talents and the virtues of his life. Juſtice, integrity, temperance, modeſty, zeal for the maintenance of diſcipline and good order, form his character; the only blemiſhes in which were, a love of money, and too great a liberality in his promiſes. Having eſcaped the tyranny of Commodus, who perhaps deſpiſed him on account of his low birth, of which he had not the weakneſs to be aſhamed, he was raiſed to the imperial dignity by Lætus, captain of the pretorian guards, and head of the conſpiracy againſt the late emperour; who brought him to the camp, and obliged the ſoldiers to proclaim him, almoſt againſt their wills, on a promiſe of paying them twelve thouſand ſeſterces per man. The ſenate and people, with tranſports of joy, recognized a prince whoſe character was really reſpectable. In order to diſcharge the promiſed donatives, which were unhappily become neceſſary, he ſold all the rich furniture collected by the fooliſh luxury of Commodus.

193. Pertinax raiſed to the empire by the ſoldiers.

In a ſhort time the government of the Antonini was revived. In three months the laws reſumed their vigour, the debts were diſcharged, the revenue again put on a good footing, and even funds in reſerve for public works. So abundant are the reſources of economy, when the expenſes attendant on vain parade are retrenched. Pertinax found means to increaſe the revenue without laying new impoſts. He divided the waſte lands among whoever pleaſed to cultivate them; and encouraged the improvers by an exemption from all taxes for ten years. He was convinced, and with reaſon, that agriculture is an inexhauſtible mine, where the proſperity of individuals always conduces to that of the ſtate.

His wiſe government.

But

Aſſaſſinated by the pretorian guards.

But the pretorian ſoldiers had contracted too great a reliſh for the pleaſures of licentiouſneſs to ſubmit to diſcipline with patience. An emperour who attempted a reformation was in their eyes a tyrant; and they were encouraged to revolt even by Lætus himſelf, who had made choice of Pertinax only with a view to gratify his own ambition. They therefore haſtened to the palace, and aſſaſſinated that great man; who, without making the leaſt reſiſtance, wrapped himſelf up in his robe, and expired, invoking Jupiter the Avenger. His reign, which laſted only three months, deſerves to be immortalized. His death is one of thoſe events which originate from a principle productive of a long ſeries of unavoidable calamities.

The empire ſold by auction.

The world then ſaw an inſtance of the lengths to which an unbridled ſoldiery, dead to every ſenſe of ſhame, can proceed. They had often beſtowed the empire for money; they now ſet it up to auction. Two bidders ſtood forth, Sulpicianus, the father in law of Pertinax, and Didius Julianus, a man of a diſtinguiſhed family. The laſt carried it at the price of twenty five thouſand ſeſterces per man; and fear obliged the ſenate to confirm this infamous bargain.

Three emperours at the ſame time, Didius, Niger, and Septimius Severus.

The moment that Didius mounted the throne, which was thus diſgraced, the people, filled with indignation, caſt their eyes on Niger, governour of Syria, a general of great reputation, and invited him to avenge and govern the ſtate; upon which he was proclaimed emperour by his troops, and acknowledged by all the provinces of the Eaſt. Had he uſed diligence, his ſucceſs would have been infallible and eaſy; but while he trifled away the time in too great ſecurity, a dangerous rival ſtarted up, who made the beſt uſe of the critical opportunity. The legions of Illyria were commanded by Septimius Severus, a man who to ambition joined a ſuperiour genius, activity, and addreſs. By bewailing the murder of Pertinax, and affecting a deſire to revenge it, he procured himſelf to be proclaimed emperour, without ſeeming to deſire it. Thus we ſee

three

three emperours at a time, all whoſe titles were founded on the nomination of the ſoldiers.

Severus marched towards Rome, without meeting with any reſiſtance; for Italy was now unacquainted with war, the armies guarding the frontiers of the empire, and the pretorian bands being rather ſatellites than ſoldiers. Didius, ſtruck with conſternation, offered to ſhare the ſovereignty; and the ſenate actually made his enemy his colleague; but Severus rejected the offer of divided authority. Didius, being abandoned by the pretorians, who had been gained by his rival, was ſoon after condemned by the ſenate, and executed, exclaiming, *What crime have I committed?* This dotard, after having bargained for and purchaſed the empire, imagined himſelf without reproach, becauſe in the ſixty ſix days of which his reign conſiſted he had committed no act of barbarity. It muſt indeed be acknowledged, that cuſtom often ſpreads ſo ſtrong an illuſion, as to obſcure even the cleareſt truths of morality. By ſeeing the donatives, which from motives of intereſt were laviſhed by every new emperour on the ſoldiers, men acquired the habit of looking even upon the imperial dignity as venal. And of what could they be aſhamed, when every right appeared to be beſtowed by money? If ſuch examples be capable of corrupting entire nations, how dreadful muſt their infection be on the minds of opulent individuals!

Severus marches to Rome, and rids himſelf of Didius.

Didius executed.

SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS.

SEVERUS was dreaded at Rome, and not without reaſon. The ſenate having ſent him a deputation from their body, he cauſed them to be ignominiouſly ſearched before they were admitted to his preſence. He received them ſurrounded by his guards, but they were diſmiſſed with marks of his liberality. All the pretorian ſoldiers who had been concerned in the murder of Pertinax were put to death, and the reſt broke

193. Septimius Severus gives the ſenators a bad reception, and breaks the pretorian guards.

and

and baniſhed from Rome for life; after which Severus picked out the flower of his legions, and formed from them a new body of guards. This was a prudent ſtep, eſpecially if it had been in his power to eradicate the depravity of the old troops. In the modern hiſtory, we ſhall ſee more than one prince ſecure his throne by the ſame ſpirited exertion of authority.

He binds himſelf by an oath not to put any ſenator to death, but breaks it.

The emperour, having made his entry at the head of about ſixty thouſand men, proceeded to the ſenate, laid before them the motives of his conduct, promiſed a mild and equitable government, and took an oath to obſerve the laws. He even propoſed, that a decree ſhould be paſſed prohibiting him from putting any perſon to death without the conſent of the ſenate, under pain of being declared a public enemy. But though the principles of arbitrary government or deſpotiſm had not yet taken root, the power of the ſword eaſily made the maſter of the legions maſter of the ſtate. During the courſe of his reign, Severus imbrued his hands in the blood of a multitude of ſenators. What a difference is there between the promiſes of a Titus and thoſe of a prince who regulates his conduct ſolely by his own intereſt!

194. Niger defeated and ſlain in Aſia.

Having thus in a ſhort time ſettled affairs at Rome, he croſſed into Aſia, where Niger had a conſiderable party. Three battles gained by his generals, one at Cyzicus, another at Nice in Bithynia, and the third near Niſſa in Cicilia, ſecured to him the poſſeſſion of the empire. Niger commanded in perſon at the two laſt, and at that of Niſſa was ſlain in the flight, after loſing twenty thouſand men. Severus was not preſent at any of thoſe engagements. It may be obſerved, that the Aſiatic troops, like the natives of that country, being enervated by the poiſon of luxury, commonly made but a weak reſiſtance againſt the European legions, which were better diſciplined, and inured to fatigue. Byzantium ſurrendered at diſcretion, after a ſiege of three years, and the victor marked his progreſs with acts of cruelty, as but too often happens in civil wars.

His

His ambition required another victim in the perſon of Albinus, governour of Britain, who might have been a dangerous rival, and whoſe attempts he had prevented, by pretending to give him a ſhare in the empire, having conferred on him the title of Cæſar before his departure from Rome. But having now nothing to fear on the ſide of Aſia, he thought only how to get rid of Albinus; and, in order to find a pretence for cruſhing him, provoked his reſentment, by depriving him of the dignity of Cæſar; when that general, ſeeing his ruin determined, cauſed himſelf to be proclaimed emperour, and marched for Italy, but was met by Severus, and, being defeated in a deciſive battle between Lyons and Trevoux, laid violent hands on himſelf. The emperour, after inſulting his body, ſent his head to the ſenate with a menacing letter, in which he reproached them with a predilection for a rival whom he had made his colleague. Terrour then appeared to him preferable to that reſpect which equity inſpires!

Severus rids himſelf of Albinus, whom he had created Cæſar.

197. Death of Albinus.

This ſucceſs was followed by dreadful executions. Far from imitating the conduct of other victorious generals, and burning the papers of Albinus, he examined them with the utmoſt care, in order to find the names of the diſaffected. Twenty nine, or according to Spartian forty one, ſenators, were ſacrificed to his ſuſpicions and revenge; and perhaps the divine honours which he cauſed to be paid to Commodus were a ſtill greater outrage againſt that body. But at the ſame time he ſo firmly ſecured the affections of the populace and the ſoldiery by ſhews, profuſe donatives, and the unbounded licentiouſneſs in which he indulged them, that he was not afraid to return into Aſia to oppoſe the Parthians, who had put themſelves in motion, and paſſed ſeveral years in that country, where he met with ſome fruitleſs ſucceſſes. The Arabians obliged him twice to raiſe the ſiege of Atra, a city which had baffled the arms of Trajan; but none of theſe expeditions furniſh us with any intereſting particulars.

Severus gives himſelf up to cruelty, while he flatters the populace and the ſoldiery.

Is governed by Plautian as Tiberius had been by Sejanus.

With a character ſimilar to that of Tiberius, ſuſpicious, deceitful, and cruel, Severus fell, like him, into the ſnares of flattery, and had another Sejanus. Plautian, who, as well as the emperour, was a native of Africa, had gained an entire aſcendancy over him, and inſolently abuſed his power. More maſter of the ſtate than his ſovereign, he put to death whom he pleaſed, enriched himſelf by rapine, and diſplayed all the haughtineſs, all the arrogance, of an unprincipled favourite. An officer of juſtice, being ordered by the emperour to bring an affair before the board, replied—*I cannot, without an order from Plautian.* This miniſter, being raiſed to the higheſt honours, captain of the pretorian guards, and conſul, married his daughter to Caracalla, eldeſt ſon of Severus, and who already bore the title of Auguſtus. According to Dion Caſſius, an eye witneſs, but a credulous hiſtorian, and of little judgment, though a ſenator, the preſents which he made to his daughter would have been ſufficient for fifty queens.

Fall and death of this favourite.

This honourable match was the cauſe of his ruin; ſo near are the grandeurs of ambition to the precipice. Caracalla mortally hated the miniſter, and no leſs deteſted a wife who had been forced upon him; he therefore forged an accuſation againſt Plautian, and found means to make him appear guilty; upon which the emperour ſent for his favourite, and gave him a gentle reprimand. The other attempted to juſtify himſelf, when the young prince attacked him in a fury, and, having diſarmed him, cauſed him to be put to death by a ſoldier in the preſence of Severus.

208. Vicious diſpoſition of the emperour's ſons, Caracalla & Geta.

By this action we may judge of the impetuous and ſavage diſpoſition of Caracalla, between whom and his brother Geta an irreconcilable hatred had ſubſiſted from their tendereſt years. Both of theſe princes, naturally addicted to every vice, and abandoned to all the exceſſes of debauchery, were ſtill more corrupted by the domeſtics of the court, the gladiators and players, who were their only companions. Severus, finding his remonſtrances fruitleſs, and being even unable to gain upon them by puniſhing

niſhing their corruptors, which, however, was a ſtep he took too late, conceived hopes of reforming them by the avocations of war. The northern Britons having invaded the Roman province, where they committed great ravages, he embraced that opportunity with the greater ardour, as old age and diſeaſe had not weakened his love of glory, and forced his way to the northern extremity of the iſland, through a thouſand difficulties, continually haraſſed by the barbarians, whom he never could bring to a general engagement. In this expedition, which, though it coſt fifty thouſand men, gained him only a patch of land, he a little extended the boundaries of the province, and built a new wall between the friths of Forth and Clyde; but the young Auguſtuſes (for Geta had likewiſe obtained that title) were neither leſs vicious nor leſs enemies to each other than before.

He takes them with him into Great Britain, where he meets with little ſucceſs.

While the emperour was concluding a treaty with the Britons, Caracalla advanced in ſight of the two armies to commit a parricide, but was ſtopped by loud cries; and Severus, having without any emotion finiſhed the affair he was about, afterwards ſent for his unnatural ſon to his tent, and, preſenting him with a ſword in the preſence of Papinian, captain of the pretorian guards, addreſſed him in the following words—*If you are reſolved to be your father's murderer, execute your deſign here; or if you dare not ſhed my blood with your own hands, order Papinian to do it. You are his emperour, and he will obey.* However, this pathetic remonſtrance had little effect; next year the unfeeling monſter formed another conſpiracy to dethrone his father, who puniſhed his accomplices, and again ſpared his ſon.

He pardons Caracalla, who attempted to aſſaſſinate him.

Severus, alſo at that time laboured under a fit of ſickneſs, could not bear up under ſuch a weight of afflictions. Finding his death approach, he exclaimed, *I have been all, and all is nothing.* Having called for the urn deſtined to receive his aſhes, he ſaid, at ſight of it, *Thou ſhalt incloſe the man whom the world could not contain.* It is added, that having made his children read

211. Death of Severus.

the dying words of Micipſa to his ſons and Jugurtha, he applied to himſelf theſe words—*I leave my ſons an empire, powerful if they be virtuous, weak if they be vicious.* Yet Dion makes him give the two princes a maxim, breathing the moſt violent ſpirit of tyranny—*Enrich the ſoldiers; do not trouble yourſelves about the reſt.* This emperour, who died at York in the ſixty ſixth year of his age, was a man of great abilities, but his character was a ſtrange mixture of virtues and vices. He loved learning, and wrote the hiſtory of his own life in Latin.

Maxim which he gave to his ſons.

Under this reign Tertullian compoſed his apology for the Chriſtians, againſt whom the ancient laws were put in force. *We fill your cities, your towns, your ſenate, your armies*, ſays he, *we leave you only your temples and theatres.* A paſſage which puts the progreſs of Chriſtianity out of all doubt. Diogenes Laertius, Philoſtratus, Solon, and other authors of the ſame time, as well as Athenæus, who was cotemporary with Commodus, ſhew by their writings the general decay of good taſte. The period was arrived when genius, deſtitute of emulation and culture, neglected the good models, and fell into a torpor not far removed from barbariſm.

Tertullian and other authors.

Decay of taſte.

CARACALLA and GETA.—MACRINUS.

211. Caracalla and Geta reign together, but deteſt one another.

SEVERUS, being deſirous to admit his eldeſt ſon to a ſhare of the empire, who was known by the name of Baſſianus, made him change it to that of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, a name too reſpectable to be aſſociated with the idea of a tyrant, and therefore the nickname of Caracalla is preſerved in hiſtory. Geta at firſt reigned jointly with his brother; but, notwithſtanding a ſeeming reconciliation, their mutual hatred daily increaſed; and they were conſtantly laying ſnares for each other, till at laſt a ſcheme was formed of dividing the empire, which project we ſhall ſee take place in a future period. The elder was to have reigned in the Weſt,

Weſt, and the younger in the Eaſt; but their mother, Julia, diſſuaded them from an unpopular innovation, which yet was the only means that could have prevented fratricide.

212. Caracalla aſſaſſinates his brother.

Caracalla cauſed his brother to be aſſaſſinated even in the arms of his mother Julia; and, flying to the pretorian camp, pleaded his cauſe with the army, perſuading them that what he had done was only from motives of ſelf preſervation. He beſtowed upon them an immenſe donative, and was proclaimed ſole emperour. Surrounded with guards, he went to the ſenate, where he vindicated himſelf as well as he could, and conſented to his brother's apotheoſis, ſaying, (as we are told by Spartian) *That ſince he was dead he had no objection to his being made a god.* To gain a character of clemency, he cauſed all the exiles, guilty or innocent, to be recalled, as if it had been poſſible to efface the remembrance of ſo many inſtances of heinous wickedneſs which he had committed, and to aſſume the appearance of clemency after giving the ſtrongeſt proofs of unfeeling cruelty.

He commits horrid cruelties.

The public was ſoon enabled by facts to judge of the reality of this clemency; for all the friends of Geta were maſſacred; and, if we may credit Dion, twenty thouſand people were involved in the carnage. Many of the moſt illuſtrious ſenators fell by the hand of the executioner, and among the reſt Papinian, who had been made captain of the pretorian guards by Severus. Papinian was ſo reſpected as a civilian, that by a law of Valentinian III. his opinion was to be followed in caſe the judges were divided. The emperour had required of him to make an apology for the murder of Geta, to which Papinian, inſpired with virtue and courage, made the following reply—*It is not ſo eaſy to juſtify parricide as to commit it; and it is a ſecond parricide to defame an innocent perſon after depriving him of life.* A daughter of Marcus Aurelius, his grandſon Pompeianus, the ſon of Pertinax, and a couſin german of Caracalla, were reckoned among the victims of this cruel tyrant.

Murder of Papinian.

After

He is indifferent about all but the army.

After this we need not be ſurpriſed at any exceſs committed by Caracalla. The debaſing of the coin, rapines, and extortions of all kinds, were but venial treſpaſſes, when compared with the horrid enormities of this reign. The property of the people was devoted to the ſoldiers, for they were the tyrant's only ſupport. His mother repreſenting to him one day that he had exhauſted every means of getting money—*While I have this*, replied he, laying his hand on his ſword, *I ſhall not want money*. He granted the privileges of the city to all the ſubjects of the empire, becauſe the citizens paid taxes to which the others were not ſubject; and by this means the Roman people were confounded with all the worthleſs, barbarous inhabitants of the provinces, to gratify the ſordid intereſt of the emperour.

Rights of citizenſhip granted to all the ſubjects of the empire.

Fooliſh expeditions of Caracalla.

The military expeditions of Caracalla only ſerve as proofs of his madneſs. He had ſuch an enthuſiaſtic regard for the memory of Alexander, that he wanted to have a Macedonian phalanx, and perſecuted the peripatetics out of hatred to Ariſtotle, whom he ridiculouſly ſuppoſed to have had a ſhare in the death of that hero. He fancied that by running over a number of the provinces, not as a general, but as a ſoldier, or rather by affecting a military life, he was treading the ſteps of Alexander. He was dreaded and deſpiſed by the Gauls, the Germans, the people of Aſia and Africa, who were witneſſes of his cruelty and cowardice. He purchaſed a peace with the Germans, and learnt from the Gauls to wear a habit called *Caracalla*, from whence his name was derived. He aſſumed the ſurname of Parthicus, without having conquered or even ſeen the Parthians. He treacherouſly maſſacred the people of Alexandria in revenge for a piece of raillery. The new Alexander was in every thing Caracalla.

217. Macrinus kills him, and takes his place.

He wanted to get rid of Macrinus, captain of the pretorian guards, a native of Mauritania, who by aſſiduity and application had raiſed himſelf from obſcurity. Macrinus ſaw his danger, and prevented it by aſſaſſinating the emperour. Concealing his guilt, he cauſ-

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ed himſelf to be proclaimed by the army, and was very ſoon acknowledged by the ſenate. Caracalla was equally abhorred by the citizens, and beloved by the ſoldiers, upon whom he laviſhed all his treaſures. To ſoften their regret for the loſs, Macrinus cauſed him to be ranked among the gods. Deifying monſters was no longer a novelty!

The uſurper did not long continue to enjoy his good fortune. On the one hand, he made himſelf contemptible by beſtowing immenſe ſums upon Artabanes king of Parthia, and giving himſelf up entirely to the pleaſures of Antioch: on the other, he rendered himſelf odious, from affecting to conceal the meanneſs of his origin by pride and inſolence. In a word, he could not ſatisfy the ſoldiers, who had been accuſtomed to receive immenſe ſums of money as gifts from the emperour, and who obeyed him only upon that condition. It was become an irremediable evil, for they had been long convinced that with the ſword they could do every thing, but nothing without it. The uſurper contemptible & odious.

218. Mæſa procures her grandſon Heliogabalus to be proclaimed emperour.

Mæſa, an ambitious woman, ſiſter of the wife of Severus, occaſioned the revolution. She introduced her grandſon, the young Heliogabalus, prieſt of the Sun, and a relation of Caracalla. She was not aſhamed to report that Heliogabalus was the fruit of her daughter's adultery with that emperour; and by her liberalities gained over one of the legions that was encamped near Emeſa in Phœnicia, the place of his birth. Heliogabalus was received and proclaimed by this legion; and the troops ſent by Macrinus to oppoſe the rebels joined them. Macrinus himſelf was defeated, after having declared his rival the enemy of the public. He eſcaped from Antioch, and afterwards flying acroſs Aſia Minor was taken and put to death. A ſcheme of reforming the army drew upon him the hatred of the ſoldiers.

HELIOGABALUS.

HELIOGABALUS.

218. Heliogabalus a monſter.

CALIGULA, Nero and Domitian ſeem to have revived in a youth of fourteen; or rather Heliogabalus aſcended the throne to exceed them all. In his letter to the ſenate, he aſſumed all the titles of ſovereign authority, which till then had never been done even by the tyrants, without a decree of that body. He proclaimed himſelf the imitator of Auguſtus and Marcus Aurelius, while his head was filled only with follies, and his heart was a mixture of infamous wickedneſs and meanneſs.

He aſſaſſinates Gannys, his governour.

Before he quitted Aſia, not ſatisfied with putting to death the moſt illuſtrious adherents of Macrinus, he killed with his own hand his governour Gannys, to whom he was chiefly indebted for his ſucceſs; and placed all his confidence in Eutychien, a worthleſs buffoon, upon whoſe head he heaped the firſt honours of the ſtate. Looking with contempt upon the Roman garb, he ſubſtituted ſilk and embroidery in its ſtead, and whatever effeminate luxury could conceive that was magnificent and voluptuous. On his arrival at Rome he introduced his grandmother Mæſa into the ſenate, where ſhe voted as a member; a ſingular example in this hiſtory. He inſtituted a female ſenate to judge of faſhions, carriages, and ſuch trifles. Every year he changed his wife; he perſonated a woman, and was married to a ſlave, to whom he reſigned his authority, and publicly plunged into ſuch horrid debauchery as is too ſhocking to mention. If hiſtorians have greatly exaggerated, ſuch exaggerations could only have been made of a monſter.

He inſtitutes a female ſenate.

His debaucheries.

His ſuperſtitions.

A mad ſuperſtition completed the meaſure of his abominable exceſſes; and the profane Heliogabalus ſtript all the temples in favour of the Syrian god, to whom he was high prieſt, with an intention to introduce the worſhip of that deity inſtead of Jupiter himſelf. He cauſed the ſtatue of a goddeſs to be brought from Carthage to

marry

marry her to his god; and the nuptials coſt him an immenſe ſum. It is ſaid that he ſacrificed children to his favourite divinity; that in honour of him he ſubmitted to circumciſion, and thought the office of high prieſt to him the greateſt poſſible dignity; in one word, from his fantaſtical ſuperſtition, he was looked upon by ſome people as ridiculous, by others as ſacrilegious.

As it was foreſeen that his reign could not be of long duration, he had been obliged to adopt his couſin Alexianus, known by the name of Alexander Severus. The new Cæſar was very ſoon the object of his furious malice, and he made ſeveral attempts to aſſaſſinate him; but the pretorian guards revolted in favour of Alexander, and put to death Heliogabalus, at the age of eighteen, together with his mother Soëmis. He was the thirteenth emperour that died a violent death, and moſt of his ſucceſſors ended their days in the ſame manner; but, however, ambition ſtill continued to aſpire to the ſame honours, and tyranny to provoke human vengeance. We ſee deſpotiſm prevail in Turkey in theſe days, but we ſee no inſtances of ſuch dreadful reigns. The Turks pay a regard to morals, but the generality of the Romans at that time paid none. We cannot too much inſiſt upon this as one of the chief cauſes of the happineſs or miſery of nations. Whoever has a regard for his children or his country, muſt be ſenſible that virtue ought to be the principal object of his attention. May governments learn from hiſtory that to have ſubjects worthy of ſerving their king and country, men muſt be made virtuous!

222. He is aſſaſſinated.

ALEXANDER SEVERUS.

ALEXANDER, who was only thirteen years of age, from his youth and the poſſeſſion of the imperial throne, was more than commonly expoſed to ſeduction; but an excellent diſpoſition, carefully improved, can profit even by vicious examples, and become more

222. Alexander begins well, notwithſtanding his youth.

more zealouſly attached to a life of virtue. His grandmother Mæſa, and Mamea, his mother, preſerved him from the ſnares of flattery, by keeping improper ſociety at a diſtance. They formed a council for him, conſiſting of ſixteen reſpectable ſenators, among whom were the famous civilians Ulpianus and Paulus. The laws were at laſt to reſume their authority, or rather only to have that appearance, for they do not really govern but when they have poſſeſſion of the hearts of the people.

His virtues.

Juſtice and mercy, moderation and ſteadineſs, liberality and economy, zeal and prudence, with all the virtues of good princes, were to be found in Alexander's government. It is enough to ſay, that he had that maxim continually before his eyes which the Chriſtian religion has rendered ſacred—*Do unto others that which thou wouldeſt they ſhould do unto thee.*

The captain of the pretorian guards intruſted with too great power.

His giving the captains of the pretorian guards a place in the ſenate was certainly impolitic; for by that means their office, which had already too great influence, added the civil to the military power, and they became judges in the moſt important cauſes, either in the name of the prince, or conjointly with him. This change was intended to prevent ſenators from being judged by knights; and the great merit of Ulpianus, who was at that time captain, made the emperour loſe ſight of what might be apprehended from the ſame power devolving upon his ſucceſſors.

Licentiouſneſs of the pretorian guards.

A habit of unbridled licentiouſneſs had put an end to all ſubordination in the pretorian guards, and every attempt to reſtore diſcipline occaſioned a mutiny. Ulpianus, the friend and miniſter of Alexander, was killed in one of theſe ſeditions. Dion the hiſtorian, who commanded in Pannonia, from his zeal to effect a reformation, became the next object of their hatred; and they had the inſolence to demand his head: but this inſult only ſerved to procure him new honours. The emperour made him his colleague in the conſulſhip, but at the ſame time adviſed him to withdraw, upon which he retired to his native country Bithynia. So much was government fettered by military licentiouſneſs. A

A very important revolution, in which Rome was deeply intereſted, took place about this time, and greatly changed the face of affairs in the Eaſt. The Parthian empire, which had been eſtabliſhed by Arſaces in the year of Rome 502, notwithſtanding the violent ſhocks which it had ſuſtained from the conquerors of the world, ſtill preſerved its independence, and the Parthians might boaſt their being invincible; but they ſuddenly diſappeared, as if they had been ſwallowed up by another power. Artaxerxes, a Perſian hero, animated with the ancient glory of his country, and ambitious to reſtore the throne of Cyrus to its former ſplendour, revolted againſt Artabanes, the laſt king of Parthia, gained three victories, and at laſt killed him. He made himſelf maſter of the empire of Arſaces, which had ſubſiſted for more than four hundred and ſeventy five years, and contained at that time eighteen kingdoms or large provinces: the Perſian name once more emerged from that obſcurity into which it had been plunged by the viciſſitude of human affairs, after having ſhone conſpicuous for ages. Is not this eaſily accounted for, by ſaying that the Perſians were only the ſame people with the Parthians, that their courage had been whetted by their wars with Rome, and at the utmoſt it was ſcarce any thing but a change of name?

Artaxerxes reſtores the Perſian empire.

The Parthians diſappear.

Artaxerxes, elated with power and ſucceſs, undertook to make war againſt the Romans. He claimed Meſopotamia, Syria, and Aſia Minor to the Egean ſea, as the conqueſts of Cyrus and appendages of the Perſian empire. It is ſurpriſing to ſee titles which had been forgotten for ages revived upon ſuch pretenſions; but every title is ſufficient in the eyes of ambitious conquerors. Though they are ingenious in finding pretences, is not their real right reſted upon force? The Romans ſcarcely knew a better founded title; and at laſt the ſame ſcourge which they had employed againſt ſo many nations, was turned againſt themſelves.

He claims the provinces conquered by the Romans.

Alexander marched againſt the Perſians; and one of his legions having mutinied, he had the courage to break

232. Alexander marches to oppoſe

him, and reſtores diſcipline.

break them for an example to the reſt.—*Citizens*, cried he, *lay down your arms and retire*. The mutineers obeyed, but in a ſhort time the legion was reſtored. Attentive to preſerve diſcipline, he always mixed clemency and mildneſs with its neceſſary ſeverities. If it had not been for the univerſal degeneracy which prevailed at that time, his conduct could not have failed of ſucceſs.

Contradictory accounts by different hiſtorians.

According to Herodian, and all the Eaſtern writers, Alexander was totally defeated by the Perſians; while Lampridius ſays, that he gained a complete victory. This writer mentions a ſpeech of the emperour to the ſenate, in which he tells them, that the enemy had ſeven hundred elephants, eighteen hundred chariots armed with ſcythes, a hundred and twenty thouſand horſe, beſides other troops, and that the whole were cut in pieces. He declares that he extracted this ſpeech from the regiſters of the ſenate. Notwithſtanding the contrary evidences, he is generally believed upon his word. But Lampridius, Herodian, Capitolinus, Eutropius, and in general all the writers of the *auguſt* hiſtory, are ſo full of blunders, condradictions, and falſehoods, that it is difficult to rely upon any of them; and the preſent is a remarkable inſtance of the uncertainty into which we are frequently thrown by bad hiſtorians.

War in Germany.

The Germans having begun to lay waſte the country of Gaul, the emperour returned to Rome; and, after triumphing over the Perſians, ſet out for Germany. From the beginning of this unfortunate expedition, he experienced what a ſlender influence virtue has over the minds of ſoldiers who are averſe from diſcipline and accuſtomed to ſeditious cabals.

235. Maximin, of Gothic origin, forms a deſign to dethrone Alexander, and cauſes him to be aſſaſſinated.

One of the principal officers of the army was Maximin, born in Thrace, of Gothic deſcent. He had been a ſhepherd in his youth, but turned ſoldier in the reign of Severus, and was advanced to the rank of tribune by Heliogabalus. Alexander employed him to diſcipline the new troops that joined him from Pannonia. His gigantic ſize, prodigious ſtrength, courage, aſſiduity, and attention to military duties, all together contribut-

ed

ed to his riſe. This barbarian (he ſtill deſerves the appellation) even dared to aſpire to the throne; fomented that ſpirit of revolt with which the ſoldiers were always animated; repreſented Alexander as a prince void of ſpirit, under female dominion, for his mother never left him; incited their thirſt for thoſe donatives which always attended the acceſſion of a new emperour; and at laſt by their means committed an execrable parricide. The virtuous Alexander was murdered when he was only twenty ſix years of age.

Veneration which Alexander paid to great men.

That veneration which Alexander ſhewed for great men of every kind (a certain proof of merit) was ſuch, that there was a ſort of adoration paid to them in his palace. Jeſus Chriſt was honoured there among the ſages, but he likewiſe aſſociated with him Apollonius Tyanæus. One of his principal cares was, never to beſtow honours upon any but ſuch as he eſteemed deſerving; and to ſell them he thought deteſtable.—*Whoever purchaſes*, ſaid he, *muſt likewiſe ſell; and we cannot puniſh any one for ſelling, after having given him leave to purchaſe.*

He diſapproves of ſelling offices.

Notwithſtanding his clemency, he did not ſpare robbers of the public, extortioners, nor that kind of court thieves who were called *ſellers of ſmoke*. Theſe laſt carried on a traffic of their real or pretended credit, and extorted money ſometimes by the hope of favours and ſometimes by a dread of ill offices.

Sellers of ſmoke.

They ſink into ignorance.

We now approach that unhappy period when the human mind, without cultivation, without judgment, and deprived of the light of ſcience, will ſeem to be likewiſe deprived of reaſon. The laws ready to ſink into a chaos, every thing decided by the ſword, and barbarity increaſed by the ſucceſs of barbarians. The great civilians diſappeared. After Papinian, Ulpian, Paulus, and Modeſtinus the diſciple of Ulpian, juriſprudence, with philoſophy and all reliſh for learning, was eclipſed. Dion Caſſius is the laſt tolerable hiſtorian of that time, if we may give the title of hiſtorian to a man of a credulous, ſuperſtitious temper, who mixes abſurd fictions with facts, which he corrupts. A great part of his hiſtory is loſt,

Laſt civilians. Dion Caſſius and Xiphilinus

loſt, which has been ſupplied by his epitomiſer Xiphilinus, a writer of the eleventh century, but ſtill more ignorant than Dion. We ſhall give a haſty ſketch of whatever can be intereſting in the hiſtory of thoſe times of ignorance and confuſion.

Succeſſors of ALEXANDER SEVERUS, *to the Acceſſion of* AURELIAN.

Dreadful ſtate of the empire for fifty years.

IN the courſe of fifty years following the death of Alexander, there are reckoned more than fifty Cæſars, who with that title, either lawful or uſurped, made their appearance to contend for the imperial throne. Proclaimed, and then murdered by their ſoldiers, they were the ſport of fortune and of cruelty. What was called the Roman empire at that time, as Monteſquieu obſerves, was *a kind of irregular republic, almoſt ſuch as the ariſtocracy of Algiers, where, the ſupreme power being in the hands of the military, they make or unmake at their pleaſure a chief magiſtrate, whom they call the Dey; and perhaps it may be regarded as a general rule, that in ſome reſpects military governments are rather republican than monarchical.* The government eſtabliſhed by Auguſtus, being founded ſolely on military power, could not fail to degenerate in like manner, when the army, being corrupted, had learnt that they were maſters of the empire. Let us always endeavour to trace great revolutions from their ſource.

235. Rebellions occaſioned by the tyranny of Maximin.

Maximin, being proclaimed by the army and acknowledged by the ſenate, who could do nothing to oppoſe him, carried to the throne all the natural barbarity of his temper, ſtill more irritated by ſeeing that the people remembered the lowneſs of his origin; and his cruelties were immediately followed by conſpiracies. Part of the army named another emperour, who was aſſaſſinated in a few days after. After ſome victories gained over the Germans, the Daci and Sarmatians, his tyranny became more violent; the nobles were maſſacred, and the people oppreſſed without mercy. At

At last a rebellion broke out in Africa. Gordian, proconsul of that province, a man of illustrious birth, rich, and universally beloved, was there proclaimed joint emperour with his son. The election was confirmed at Rome, and Maximin declared a public enemy by the senate; but the governour of Numidia, who was an enemy of the Gordians, attacked and destroyed them. The two Gordians.

Maximus and Balbinus were appointed to succeed them by the senate, and the young Gordian was added, as Cæsar, by the people. Maximin, breathing revenge, drew near Italy; but while he was engaged in the siege of Aquileia, he and his son were murdered by the pretorian guards. He was commonly called a Busiris, or a Cyclop; but these odious names did not sufficiently express the hatred inspired by his tyranny. 238. Maximin murdered.

An equitable government began to lessen the public calamities, but the pretorian guards very soon blasted these hopes. Provoked at seeing emperours who were not of their creation, and dreading the punishment they deserved, they rushed into the palace, while the people were at the games, and, seizing Maximus and Balbinus, dragged them through the streets, while they loaded them with blows and insults, and at last put them to death with the greatest barbarity. The emperour's guards, or rather the masters of the empire, no longer performed any other exploits. Maximus & Balbinus killed.

To preserve themselves from being punished, they carried off to their camp young Gordian III. then thirteen years of age, an amiable prince, who was readily acknowledged both by senate and people. Eunuchs and self interested courtiers, who at first governed in his name, would have brought upon him the popular hatred by their acts of injustice, if he had not chosen an able, virtuous minister, in the person of Mysitheus, the captain of the pretorian guards, whose daughter he married. In the mean time, Sapor, the successor of Artaxerxes, who inherited his power, and resolved to prosecute his great designs, kindled the war in the East, and seized Mesopotamia. Mysitheus governs prudently under Gordian III. Sapor repulsed.

The death of Myſitheus.

Meſopotamia. Gordian ſet out to attack him; and, having repulſed him, took Niſibis, which was at that time the capital of the country; but, having loſt Myſitheus, the author of his ſucceſs, he choſe in his room, Philip, a treacherous, ambitious Arab, of the loweſt extraction, who, like Maximin, did not heſitate to raiſe himſelf by a moſt atrocious crime.

244. Philip, captain of the pretorian guards, ſeizes the empire.

The new captain of the pretorian guards was not aſhamed to attempt the ruin of his benefactor, and withheld the proviſions of the army on purpoſe to ſtir up a mutiny. By inſinuating that it was the emperour's fault, and that he was incapable of governing, he wrought ſo far upon the minds of the people, that they obliged Gordian to receive him as a colleague and tutor, after which he completed his treachery by cauſing Gordian to be ſecretly murdered, and then pretended to reſpect his memory.

Decius emperour. Philip killed.

One crime always leads to another. Philip was ſcarcely got back to Rome, after having concluded a peace with Sapor, and thought himſelf firmly ſeated on the throne, when the armies in Syria and Mæſia choſe two emperours, Jotapian and Marinus, both of whom very ſoon became the victims of their ambition. The legions in Pannonia and Mæſia next proclaimed Decius, who immediately ſet out to attack his rival, when Philip and his ſon were both killed in an action near Verona. Eccleſiaſtical writers alledge that he was a Chriſtian; but it is of little conſequence to religion whether it remain in doubt or be proved. It is of greater importance to morals to obſerve, that Philip puniſhed with ſeverity whoever were guilty of unnatural crimes. They were ſo public and ſo frequent in Rome, that Alexander durſt not prohibit them. A tax was paid into the treaſury for the privilege of indulging in ſuch ſhameful proſtitutions.

249. The Goths paſs the Danube.

Decius was remarkable for the perſecution of the church during his reign. The Chriſtians have repreſented him as a tyrant, and the Pagans as a prince deſerving the higheſt encomiums. An irruption of the Goths,

Goths, a people whom we ſhall have frequent opportunities of mentioning*, obliged him to arm. Priſcus, who was believed to be the emperour's brother, joined theſe barbarians, and loſt his life in attempting to uſurp the empire. Gallus, with ſimilar views of ambition, led Decius into an ambuſcade, where he was killed by the Goths after a reign of two years.

Rebellions againſt Decius.

Gallus in his turn was killed by his ſoldiers, fighting againſt Emilianus, who contended with him for the empire. Emilianus fell in the ſame manner, marching againſt his competitor Valerian, who had hitherto been reckoned a worthy man, and a good magiſtrate, but became a very weak emperour. The barbarians on all ſides poured upon the provinces, which were too much expoſed to their attempts from what they had ſuffered by civil wars, the marching of armies, and the confuſion which naturally followed ſuch frequent changes of ſovereigns. Valerian's generals gained ſeveral victories over them in Gaul and Illyria; but ſwarms of Scythians laid waſte Aſia Minor, and took Trebizond, Chalcedon, Nice and Nicomedia. Sapor at the ſame time gained ſome conqueſts, and even pillaged Antioch. The emperour marched into that country, and having loſt a battle, ſued for a peace. He went to negotiate in perſon with Sapor without having taken any precaution, and being made priſoner, was treated as a ſlave till his death, after a captivity of at leaſt three years.

Civil wars.

Irruptions of the barbarians.

260. Valerian made priſoner by Sapor.

The nobleneſs of his ſentiments ſhines forth in one inſtance, which deſerves to be mentioned, the rather that for a long time we ſcarcely ſee any veſtige of virtue. He had nominated the famous general Aurelian to be conſul, who being poor, and not in circumſtances to treat the people with games and to defray the cuſtomary expenſes of that office, Valerian commanded that they ſhould be paid out of the public treaſure, and wrote the order

Noble behaviour of Valerian to Aurelian.

* I ſhall give an account of the Goths and other barbarous conquerors, when their incurſions have more important conſequences, and when they are upon the point of eſtabliſhing themſelves in the empire.

order in the following terms—*We have named Aurelian conſul. By his poverty he is great, greater than any other; but as he is not in a ſituation to ſupport the expenſe, you ſhall give him, &c.* Admirable expreſſions, but of no effect in a corrupt age!

Nothing but miſery and rebellions during the reign of his ſon Gallienus.

Gallienus, the ſon of Valerian, being choſen emperour, far from being deſirous of the honour of revenging the ill treatment of his father, and freeing him from priſon, ran into every exceſs of debauchery, while plague, wars, famine, rebellions, contempt of the laws, and other dreadful calamities, ſet the empire in combuſtion. The tranſactions of this reign form a diſmal chaos, upon which it would be fruitleſs to attempt to throw any lights: it was nothing but a continuation of ravages by the barbarians, and inſurrections of the army.

Emperours proclaimed in great number. Poſthumus.

A crowd of rebels aſſumed the title of emperours. Trebellius reckons no leſs than thirty, but Crevier reduces them to eighteen. Poſthumus, who reigned ſeven years in Gaul, with all the qualities of a great prince, deſerves to be diſtinguiſhed from the reſt; he repulſed the Germans, and according to cuſtom was murdered by his ſoldiers.

Odenatus and Zenobia.

Odenatus, prince of Palmyra, or chief of a tribe of Saracens, was ſtill more famous. That hero, attached to the emperour and deſpiſed by Sapor, continued without remiſſion to fight againſt the Perſians, and carried the terrour of his arms even to their capital Cteſiphon in Aſſyria. Gallienus created him Auguſtus, a title of which he ſhared the honours with his wife the famous Zenobia: but he unhappily fell a ſacrifice to domeſtic treachery, in which Zenobia was ſuſpected of having acted a part. She governed as *Queen of the Eaſt*, in the name of her children, aſſuming all the badges of imperial dignity, and exerciſing the authority, but without being recognized by Gallienus.

268. Gallienus aſſaſſinated.

Gallienus was at that time in Illyria oppoſing the barbarians, when Aureolus, a Dacian, a worthleſs inſolent man, cauſed himſelf to be proclaimed emperour in Italy, and obliged him to return. Marcian and Claudius,

two

two brave officers with whom he left the command of the army, repulſed the Goths or Scythians; for they are equally well known by either name; and having rejoined Gallienus, they conſpired againſt him, and cauſed him to be aſſaſſinated. He rendered himſelf ſo execrable by his cruelty and debauchery, that he was loaded with curſes by the people, though at the ſame time his murderers thought proper to procure him the apotheoſis. Intoxicated with infamous pleaſures and totally inſenſible to every thing elſe, when he was informed that the Egyptians had revolted, he coldly replied—*Very well, cannot we live without the linen of Egypt?* and being told that Gaul was likewiſe loſt—*Is the republic loſt becauſe we can have no more ſtuffs of Arras?*

He reduced the ſenators to the duties of magiſtracy.

The ſenators in particular were offended with him for having prohibited them from all military authority: an unexampled innovation. However, they were accuſtomed to prefer the peaceful duties of the magiſtracy to the dangers inſeparable from a military life: and here begins the diſtinction between the robe and the ſword, which had been hitherto unknown. A dread of the ſenators having too great an influence in the army occaſioned this change; but adventurers, robbers and barbarians daily made themſelves emperours.

Glorious reign of Claudius.

Irruption of the Goths into Europe.

Claudius by the uſe he made of power ſhewed that he was worthy of the ſovereignty, and if his reign had not been too ſhort he might be compared with Trajan. Aureolus, who maintained his power in Milan, offered terms of peace, which not being able to obtain, he ventured an engagement, and was killed. Tetricus had poſſeſſion of Gaul, Spain and Britain; and the emperour was prevented from turning his arms againſt him by a dreadful irruption of the Goths.—*The war againſt Tetricus*, ſaid he nobly, *only concerns me, and the other is the war of the ſtate.* Above three hundred thouſand of theſe barbarians, having made a fruitleſs attempt to ſettle in Aſia, had croſſed the Helleſpont and laid ſiege to Theſſalonica. According to Zonaras, a body of their troops took poſſeſſion of Athens, and intended to burn

They leave the Athenians their books.

all the books in that place, but were diſſuaded by one of their number, from a reflection which is more ſolid than may appear at firſt ſight, though in ſome reſpects falſe: he alledged that the Greeks, by dedicating their time to reading, neglected the art of war, and therefore were more eaſy to be conquered. Upon the arrival of Claudius, the Goths withdrew from Theſſalonica, when he purſued them to the Danube, where he came up with them and cut their army in pieces. Few more memorable victories have been known. Claudius died of an infectious diſtemper at Sirmium after a reign of three years, by which misfortune the empire loſt an excellent prince, who perhaps would have ſhared the fate of the tyrants.

Claudius defeats them, and dies.

AURELIAN.

270. War of Aurelian againſt the barbarians.

CLAUDIUS was ſucceeded by Aurelian, a man already diſtinguiſhed, and capable of ſupplying the late emperour's place, at leaſt in the department of war. He was ſoon freed from Quintillus, the brother of Claudius (who had been proclaimed by ſome troops) but was beaten near Placentia by the barbarians, who were much more formidable enemies, and, notwithſtanding their defeats, had poured like a deluge into Italy. However, he ſoon revenged his loſſes by three victories, which were followed by a peace. Rome having been filled with conſternation, he undertook to rebuild its walls, and make it a place of ſtrength. He increaſed its circuit to fifty miles, and his plan was completed by Probus. The war againſt Zenobia now called him into the Eaſt. This ambitious heroine, politic, chaſte, and learned, a pupil of the celebrated Longinus, had ſeized upon Egypt, and made herſelf miſtreſs not only of Cappadocia but Bithynia, from which there was an eaſy paſſage into Europe. Her views extended to the conqueſt of the whole Roman empire, and her courage equalled her vaſt ideas. But the ſuperiority of the European to the Aſiatic troops was one day to prove her ruin.

272. Braved by Zenobia, who is vanquiſhed and taken priſoner.

in. Aurelian, having driven her from Antioch, and defeated her army at Emeſa, purſued and beſieged her in Palmyra, a city equally ſtrong and magnificent, and furniſhed with large magazines of proviſions. Having written to Zenobia in an imperious ſtyle, he received a very haughty anſwer; however, after a long ſiege, the city beginning to feel all the horrours of famine, that princeſs fled to ſolicit ſuccours from the Perſians, but was taken priſoner on the banks of the Euphrates, and brought to Aurelian, who in a rage reproaching her for the inſolence with which ſhe had treated the Roman emperours—*I acknowledge you for emperour*, ſaid ſhe, *becauſe you know how to conquer*; *Gallienus, and thoſe who reſembled him, I did not think worthy of the name.*

Death of Longinus.

The victor ſpared her life, but he put Longinus to death, as author of the letter which ſhe had addreſſed to him. It is a ſtain on the glory of this emperour to have dipped his hands in the blood of a man of letters, who is ſtill admired for his treatiſe on the *Sublime*. Palmyra having again revolted after Aurelian had paſſed the Boſphorus, he returned and gave it up to pillage.

The whole empire ſubjected to Aurelian.

Tetricus ſtill reigned in Gaul, but, haraſſed with perpetual ſeditions, he ſighed for a private ſtation, and in a manner threw himſelf into the arms of Aurelian, ſubmitting at diſcretion immediately after the beginning of an engagement at Chalons ſur Marne, by which the empire was reunited.

His triumph.

Aurelian's triumph (deſcribed by Vopiſcus) was uncommonly magnificent. Zenobia and Tetricus ſhone among the priſoners, and both were afterwards treated with clemency. Zenobia lived at Rome as a private lady of quality, and Tetricus had a command in Italy.—*It is more glorious*, ſaid Aurelian to him, *to be governour of a ſmall diſtrict in Italy, than to reign beyond the Alps.* Things have much changed ſince, and in conſequence men's opinions.

He is elated by his proſperity.

After ſo many ſucceſſes equally brilliant and rapid, he ſeemed to forget his former modeſty. He had refuſed his wife a robe of ſilk, ſaying that it was ſhameful to purchaſe a piece of ſtuff for its weight in gold. But

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he himſelf began to wear embroidered garments adorned with precious ſtones; he alſo aſſumed the diadem, which no emperour had ventured to do before him, and on his medals we ſee the titles of *Lord* and *God*.

Donatives to gain the people.

Though naturally prone to ſeverity, he endeavoured to gain the affections of the people by donatives, and changed the ordinary diſtributions of corn into preſents of bread and clothes; to which he would have added wine, had not ſome perſon ſhrewdly remarked, that then nothing would be wanting but to furniſh the people with poultry. Theſe dangerous donatives had been long eſtabliſhed from motives of intereſt and ambition, and their effects were to make the people craving, lazy and inſolent. A good government will find employment for the poor, not ſuffer them to languiſh in idleneſs. It was a ſaying of Aurelian—*Nothing ſo good humoured as the people after a hearty meal.* But that very people grew furious when their caprices were not ſatisfied, and they inſiſted on being ſupported at the public expenſe, without doing any thing uſeful to the ſtate, which was an inexhauſtible ſource of diſorders.

Their ill effects.

Good government in other reſpects.

While Aurelian thus courted the populace, he did not neglect the affairs of government. Order and juſtice were maintained, and crimes ſeverely puniſhed; he did not ſpare thoſe unfeeling men who, under pretence of zeal for the increaſe of the revenue, oppreſſed the people; he cauſed his own ſlaves to be tried before the ordinary courts, and made wiſe regulations againſt abuſes. He is cenſured as being too ſevere; but if we examine his conduct, and reflect on the moderation with which he treated his enemies, we ſhall find that this reproach is leſs owing to real cruelty than the licentiouſneſs of his age.

Orleans and Dijon built by Aurelian.

After a ſecond viſit to Gaul, where he rebuilt the ancient town of Genabum, which from his own name he called *Aurelianum* (Orleans) and founded Dijon, from motives of prudence he abandoned Dacia, a conqueſt of Trajan ſituated to the north of the Danube, tranſporting the inhabitants into Mæſia, and made that river

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the boundary of the empire. Having reſolved to revenge on the Perſians the injuries received from Sapor, he had marched into Thrace, and was ready to paſs the Boſphorus when he was aſſaſſinated, in conſequence of a conſpiracy formed againſt him by one of his ſecretaries, Mneſtheus, who having fallen under the emperour's ſuſpicion, was afraid of being puniſhed. The death of this hero excited the wrath of the ſoldiers againſt the murderers; and a temple was erected to him upon the ſpot where he fell.

275. He is aſſaſſinated.

TACITUS.——PROBUS, &c. *to* DIOCLESIAN.

WHETHER the victories and firmneſs of Aurelian had impreſſed a dread upon ambitious minds, or the army had learned in his reign to keep within the bounds of their duty; or rather none of the competitors could gain their ſuffrages, and the principal officers had engaged in an odious conſpiracy; they by a kind of prodigy referred the election of an emperour to the ſenate, which unqueſtionably from timidity referred back the choice to the army. More than ſix months elapſed, while three meſſages of the ſame kind paſſed between them, and no uſurper ſtarted up. At laſt the ſenate pitched upon Tacitus, one of their own body, a man advanced in years, and eminent for his virtues, who with reluctance accepted ſo dangerous a ſtation.

The army and ſenate refer to each other the election of an emperour.

The firſt care of this prince was to reſtore the ſenate to its ancient dignity. He gave it the privilege of receiving ambaſſadours, of making laws, of naming proconſuls, of judging without appeal, and looked upon it as the arbiter of peace and war. This body hoped that the change would be laſting, ſo prone are ſocieties as well as individuals to feed themſelves with deluſive hopes. Tacitus having ſolicited the conſulſhip for his brother, and meeting with a repulſe from the ſenators, inſtead of complaining, ſaid with an air of ſatisfaction—*They know what prince they have made choice of.* He

Virtuous reign of Tacitus.

His reſpect for Tacitus the hiſtorian and the good emperours.

He ordered all the libraries to be provided with the works of the great hiſtorian whoſe name he bore, and whoſe kindred he thought an honour. This was not vanity, but the zeal of a good prince, becauſe nothing can be better calculated than ſuch works to inſpire a horrour for vice and tyranny. He erected a temple to the *Deified Emperours*, in which honours were to be paid to the memory of princes really eſtimable; upon which occaſion it was wittily and juſtly obſerved, that all their names might be engraved on the ſtone of a ring.

276. He is aſſaſſinated.

During the interregnum the Goths or Scythians had overrun Aſia; but the emperour marched in perſon and diſperſed them. Unluckily he had committed the adminiſtration to one of his relations, unworthy of that truſt, who was murdered for his acts of violence; and the murderers, thinking that they could not eſcape puniſhment but by the commiſſion of a blacker crime, deſtroyed Tacitus himſelf, notwithſtanding his virtues.

Is ſucceeded by Probus, who deſerves the empire.

The troops ſoon ſhewed that their deference to the ſenate after the death of Aurelian was the effect of circumſtances, not real moderation. Two armies choſe two emperours, Florianus, brother of Tacitus, and Probus, a man of uncommon merit, deſcended of an obſcure family in Pannonia, but worthy of ſucceeding the Trajans. *Reflect maturely*, ſaid he to the ſoldiers, *you will be diſcontented with your choice*; *I cannot flatter you*; but they paid no regard to his remonſtrances; and ſoon after the army of Florianus repenting that they had preferred him to ſo great a man, murdered him, and eagerly ſubmitted to Probus.

The ſenate reſpected.

Probus then wrote to the ſenate in reſpectful terms, laying before them the ſtate of affairs, and added, *It is your buſineſs to judge whether I be worthy of the empire*; *I requeſt you to regulate that matter as you ſhall think moſt proper*. Being without difficulty acknowledged by the ſenate, he followed the example of Tacitus, and left them the abſolute direction in civil matters, contenting himſelf with little more than the command of the army.

After

After the death of Aurelian, a deluge of barbarians iſſuing from Germany, Francs, Burgundians and Vandals, filled Gaul with blood and devaſtation, but were driven out by this emperour, who impoſed on them very hard conditions, obliged them to give hoſtages, ſubjected them to a tribute, carried off their cattle, and ſet apart ſixteen thouſand of their young men, whom he diſtributed among the different armies and provinces. It was a rule of his policy to draw ſuccours from the barbarians, *provided they may be felt, not ſeen*; but thus theſe nations were taught the military art.

The Germans driven out of Gaul.

Let us remark by the bye an abſurdity in Zoſimus, a Greek hiſtorian, cotemporary with Theodoſius. According to him, the Romans being in want of proviſions, there fell a ſhower of wheat, mixed with water, which furniſhed them with a ſufficient ſupply of bread. The farther we remove from the learned ages, the more is hiſtory disfigured by fables.

Abſurdity of Zoſimus.

282. Probus was inceſſantly employed, ſometimes in Europe, ſometimes in Aſia, in repulſing the barbarians, or extinguiſhing revolts; and three or four uſurpers having fallen in their attempts, peace was every where reſtored; during which, the ſoldiers were employed in uſeful works; but their mutinous ſpirit was not quelled. The emperour obliging them to dig a canal, and drain ſome marſhes near Sirmium, the place of his nativity, they killed him in a ſedition. To him France, Spain and Hungary are indebted for their vines. Domitian had forbid them to be planted, but Probus granted theſe three nations this privilege. Nature ſometimes ſeems only to wait for a good law, in order to produce treaſures.

Probus murdered in a ſedition.

Vines planted.

The army beſtowed the empire on Carus, captain of the pretorian guards, a native of Narbonne, who wrote to the ſenate in the following terms: *It ought to give you pleaſure; that a member of your order, and a denizen of your city, has been made emperour: We ſhall endeavour to appear more worthy of your eſteem than foreigners.* In fact, Claudius, Aurelian, and Probus, who were Illyrians, were

Carus reigns a ſhort time.

were not looked upon as Romans; but this circumſtance only heightened their merit; and it would have been a great deal in Carus to equal them. However, he had not time: after defeating the Sarmatians, and vigorouſly puſhing the Perſians, he was found dead in his tent, either being ſtruck with lightning, as was vulgarly reported, or, as is more probably conjectured, murdered by Aper, captain of the guards.

284. Dioclesian promoted to the empire.

Carinus and Numerianus, his two ſons, on both of whom he had beſtowed the title of Auguſtus, ſucceeded him without election. The ſecond died almoſt immediately after; and Aper was ſuſpected of a new murder. Diocleſian, being elected emperour, killed him with his own hand, in ſight of the army. It is ſaid that a druideſs propheſied, that Diocleſian ſhould be raiſed to the empire after killing a boar; and he now thought the oracle verified, becauſe of the ſignification of the Latin word *aper*. The enormous vices of Carinus certainly were of more ſervice to Diocleſian than this ridiculous prophecy. Carinus gave him battle in upper Mæſia, and would have gained a complete victory, had not the officers whoſe wives he had debauched, ſeized that opportunity of revenging the injury by aſſaſſinating him.

DIOCLESIAN *and* MAXIMIAN, CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS *and* GALERIUS.

Character of Dioclesian.

DIOCLESIAN was a native of Dalmatia, and according to ſome authors had been the ſlave and freedman of a ſenator, from which low ſtation he roſe by his merit. Under Numerianus he bore the office of *count of the domeſtics*, the emperour's houſehold troops; for the pretorian guards, ſo formidable by their continual revolts, now ſerved only in the army, or guarded the outſide of the palace. To military talents Diocleſian joined genius, policy and virtue. His actions will enable us to judge whether the reproach of tyranny, caſt upon him by the eccleſiaſtical writers, be not chargeable with

with partiality, and whether there be as much juſtice as zeal in their invectives againſt him. In the beginning of his reign he gave a remarkable proof of moderation; for though victorious, and all powerful, after a civil war, he did not deprive a ſingle perſon who had favoured his rival's party of their life, property, or honours. His moderation.

As the empire was attacked and preſſed on all ſides in the Eaſt and Weſt, Diocleſian thought it neceſſary to procure an aſſiſtant for its defence, and for this purpoſe pitched upon Maximian, a Pannonian of obſcure birth, but an able captain, notwithſtanding the ferocity of his character. A colleague of this ſtamp was not dreaded by the emperour, whoſe prudence enabled him to direct and curb that impetuous diſpoſition. Maximian drove out of Gaul thoſe dreadful Germans who were inceſſantly renewing their incurſions; and Diocleſian was no leſs ſucceſsful againſt the Perſians and barbarous nations. But new dangers again ſpringing up after victories, that the enemies might be repulſed, and the ſeditious curbed, he took the reſolution of naming two Cæſars, who ſhould each command an army, with the right of ſucceſſion to the empire; and this title was beſtowed on Conſtantius Chlorus, and Galerius; the firſt, grand nephew of Claudius II. a man eſtimable for his perſonal qualities; the other, a Dacian, of low birth, and endowed with no virtue but courage. To the firſt were aſſigned the provinces of Gaul, Spain and Britain; to the ſecond, Illyria, Thrace, Macedonia and Greece. The emperours, without making a diviſion of the empire, which ſeemed to remain ſtill one body with two heads, ſhared between them the inſpection of the provinces; Maximian governing the Weſt, and Diocleſian the Eaſt.

286. He takes Maximian for his colleague.

He likewiſe creates two Cæſars, Conſtantius Chlorus and Galerius.

Though this new ſyſtem had its advantages in the preſent circumſtances, yet it produced the moſt pernicious effects. Not to mention the jealouſy and diſcords almoſt unavoidable among ſeveral princes of equal rank, the ſovereign authority was weakened by being divided. The body was no longer directed by a ſingle head, nor the

Inconveniences of this ſyſtem of government.

the provinces accuſtomed to look upon themſelves as parts of one great whole. Beſides, every prince had his particular court, and his ſet of officers, ſupported at the public expenſe; which multiplied the taxes, and exhauſted the treaſury. Lactantius ſays, in his hyperbolical ſtyle, that more people received money from the treaſury than paid into it. Though we conſiderably leſſen his calculation, we ſtill find ſufficient reaſon to tremble for the ſubjects. Thus, when public evils are come to an extremity, the remedy is often productive of new miſchief.

Taxes multiplied.

Hot baths and other buildings of Diocleſian.

Diocleſian's magnificence, and paſſion for building, were another ſource of expenſe. His hot baths, the remains of which are ſtill to be ſeen at Rome, and which are compared by Ammianus to a province, actually ſurpaſs ordinary towns in extent. Nicomedia, his common place of reſidence, rivalled Rome in the ſtatelineſs of its buildings. But the revenue might have been much better employed in ſupplying the exigences of the empire.

Succeſſes, notwithſtanding the errours in adminiſtration.

Yet the adminiſtration was every where ſucceſsful. Julian and Achillæus, two uſurpers, were overthrown. It is true, Diocleſian abandoned a vaſt territory in Egypt above the city Elephantina, but its revenue was not ſufficient to defray the expenſe of the garriſons. Conſtantius Chlorus ſubdued Britain, where Cavalcarus, and afterwards Allectus, had uſurped the title of Auguſtus; retook the country of the Batavi from the Francs; rebuilt a great number of towns, and again eſtabliſhed the celebrated ſchool at Autun, the care of which he committed to Eumenius, an able orator, whom he attached to his perſon by the gift of an office, and a ſalary of ſix hundred thouſand ſeſterces.*

Eumenius at Autun.

Peace with the Perſians, which laſted forty years.

On the other ſide, Narſes, king of Perſia, and grandſon of Sapor, was totally routed by Galerius, after having been victorious in ſeveral engagements, and ſued for peace, which he accepted on the terms preſcribed to him. The Romans kept poſſeſſion of Meſopotamia, and

* 4843l. 15s.

and the Tigris was made their frontier. This peace laſted forty years. According to Aurelius Victor, Dioclesian might have made an easy conqueſt of the whole Perſian dominions. But what would he have gained by it? The empire was already too extenſive. A prudent monarch ought never to think of enlarging his dominions when he can ſcarce defend thoſe of which he is already poſſeſſed. Dioclesian, by preſerving his own territories, and procuring them the happy enjoyment of laſting tranquillity, did more than if he had made conqueſts.

The Chriſtians begun to be corrupted.

He had reigned eighteen years, always ſucceſsful in his enterpriſes, reſpected by his colleague and the two Cæſars; univerſally obeyed, and obſerving in his government a happy mixture of clemency and firmneſs. Far from perſecuting the Chriſtians, he ſhewed himſelf their protector. Long tranquillity had cooled their primitive fervour, which diminiſhed in proportion as their holy religion met with fewer obſtacles to its progreſs. They built ſpacious churches, where the true God was publicly worſhipped. "But," ſays Euſebius, "envy, ambition, hypocriſy, crept in amongſt us: we fought a-"gainſt one another, if not with arms, at leaſt by diſ-"courſes and writings; even the paſtors indulged them-"ſelves in quarrels and mutual animoſities, diſputing "the firſt places in the churches as if they had been ſe-"cular principalities." This evidence ſufficently proves that a ſtorm might be raiſed againſt the church by the ill conduct of Chriſtians; and that we ought not to be ſurpriſed at meeting even in eccleſiaſtical hiſtory with ſo many tranſactions hurtful to religion.

303. Edict againſt them torn by a zealot.

Galerius bore an undiſtinguiſhing hatred againſt all Chriſtians; not only from motives of cruelty but ſuperſtition, and calumniated them to the emperour, though at firſt without the ſucceſs he wiſhed. A great council being aſſembled, though the voices were unanimous againſt them, yet Dioclesian refuſed to iſſue an edict for putting them to death, yet he carried things to an exceſs of ſeverity, ordering the churches to be demoliſhed, the

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ſacred books to be burnt; every man of rank who profeſſed that religion to be deprived of his offices, thoſe in lower ſtations of their franchiſes; and, laſtly, made them incapable of carrying on an action againſt any perſon whatever in the courts of juſtice. This edict was publicly torn in pieces by a Chriſtian, who was puniſhed with death. By a ſecond edict, the magiſtrates were ordered to impriſon the biſhops and prieſts, who were charged with inflaming the zeal of the populace.

Account of a perſecution, given by Lanctantius.

If we may believe Lactantius, Galerius, in order to provoke the emperour, cauſed the palace to be ſet on fire and accuſed the Chriſtians as being the authors of it. But Conſtantine, who was upon the ſpot, ſays, in a diſcourſe handed down to us by Euſebius, that it was cauſed by lightning. Such an authority ought to be followed by hiſtorians in preference to that of Lactantius, whoſe work on perſecution was purpoſely written to ſhew that they who are guilty of that crime meet with divine puniſhment even in this life. Profane hiſtorians here failing us, we have no opportunity of comparing teſtimonies and relations; only it appears an undoubted fact, that this, which was the tenth general perſecution, is leſs to be aſcribed to Diocleſian than to the cruelty of Galerius and the fanaticiſm of the magiſtrates or people.

It made many apoſtates.

According to Euſebius, great numbers apoſtatized, which only threw additional luſtre on the glory of the martyrs. In vain did the enemies of religion attempt to triumph over her by the infliction of puniſhments; for theſe attach more ſtrongly to the truth thoſe ſouls which aſpire to eternal rewards. Every real Chriſtian eagerly deſired the crown of martyrdom.

Diocleſian diſguſted with Rome.

Diocleſian now paid a viſit to Rome for the ſecond time ſince his acceſſion to the empire, and in conjunction with his colleague celebrated a triumph over all the vanquiſhed nations. The Romans expected magnificent games and boundleſs profuſion, to which they were but too much accuſtomed, but were diſappointed by his economy. *Games celebrated under the inſpection of the cenſor,*

tenſor, he ſaid, *ought to be modeſt*; and this modeſty, which the people were incapaple of reliſhing, they converted into a ſubject for murmurs and ſarcaſms; the emperour therefore abruptly quitted a city which he deteſted. As he ſet out in the month of December, the ſeverity of the ſeaſon and the length of the journey threw him into a languiſhing diſtemper, of which he never perfectly recovered, and which unqueſtionably contributed to make him loſe all reliſh for his high fortune.

305. He abdicates the ſovereignty, together with his colleague, Maximian

The diſguſt he conceived againſt grandeur, and the cares of government, together with the importunate ſolicitations of the ambitious Galerius, determined him to abdicate the imperial dignity, in which he was imitated by Maximian. The two emperours yielded up the ſupreme power to the two Cæſars, who from that time aſſumed the title of Auguſtus; and, in order to keep up the ſame form of government, named two Cæſars, Maximian the nephew of Galerius, and Severus; two men unworthy of that high rank, whether we conſider their birth or their character. It was to Galerius that they owed their promotion; for though Maxentius, ſon of Maximian, and Conſtantine, ſon of Conſtantius Chlorus, in every reſpect deſerved the preference, yet he choſe to have ſuch as were entirely at his devotion, and ſacrificed the public good to his own ambition.

He lives happily in ſolitude.

To behold Diocleſian, after a glorious reign of twenty years, in his retirement at Salone, the place of his nativity, cultivating his garden, and congratulating himſelf on his happineſs, is a ſpectacle intereſting to mankind. When his friends wrote to him to reaſcend the throne—*If you did but ſee*, replied he, *the pulſe which I raiſe with my own hands, you would never ſpeak to me of the empire.*

His reflections on the difficulties of government.

The deſcription of the difficulties and dangers attendant upon ſupreme power, which is attributed to him by Vopiſcus, and quoted by Crevier, proves how well he knew, and how attentive he was to avoid them. *Nothing*, ſays he, *is more difficult than to govern with prudence.*

dence. Four or five men join together, and form a cabal, on purpose to deceive the prince; they direct his judgment; while shut up in his palace, he sees not the truth, nor knows any thing but from their report; he confers offices on the unworthy, and displaces those who deserve his confidence; in a word, a good and virtuous prince is sold by traitors. Happily for the world, men truly great can avoid the snares of adulation, and place their confidence with discernment.

Unequal division of the empire between Constantius Chlorus and Galerius.

Constantius Chlorus being as much distinguished for his justice, affability and beneficence, as Galerius for ambition and cruelty, it was impossible that an union could subsist between the two emperours; they therefore divided the empire, in order to govern their respective dominions separately; but the shares were far from being equal. Severus, who by his dignity of Cæsar was to govern as lieutenant of Constantius, acted only as the creature of Galerius, who was not only master of Asia, Illyria and Thrace, but likewise of Italy and Africa, the department of Severus, and of the East from Mount Amanus in Cilicia to the extremities of Egypt, which made the government of Maximian.

The first governs as father of the people.

While he was exercising his tyranny over those vast regions, Spain, Gaul and Britain tasted the sweets of an equitable government. As the only aim of Constantius was to make his subjects happy, far from enriching himself by oppressive impositions, or impoverishing them by his luxury, he even borrowed plate from his friends when he gave great entertainments; employing his money only for the public good, and possessing no treasure but the hearts of the people. Accordingly, upon the least signal they were eager to offer him all that was in their power to bestow.

He dies at York.

This excellent prince died at York, on his return from a successful expedition against the Picts.

Is succeeded by his son Constantine.

His son, Constantine, whom we shall soon see filling the throne with splendour, having escaped from Nicomedia, where Diocletian had kept him as a hostage, and Galerius intended to confine him as a prisoner, was named

ed by his father on his death bed ſole ſucceſſor to his dominions, and immediately proclaimed by the army.

In the time of Diocleſian lived the authors of the *Auguſt* hiſtory, Capitolinus, Lampridius, Trebellius, Spartian and Vopiſcus, whoſe wretched compoſitions, though neceſſary for want of better, are the more unfit for a body of connected hiſtory, as they contradict each other, and none of them is entirely conſiſtent with himſelf. We have already obſerved, that good taſte had vaniſhed, with truth in her train. Authors of the *Auguſt* Hiſtory.

The Platonic philoſophy had again been brought into vogue by Plotinus, who, in the time of Gallienus, ſolicited permiſſion to build a city in Campania, in order there to realize the ſyſtem of Plato's repuplic: but he ought rather to have pitched upon a deſert far from any communication with the reſt of mankind; and even then his ſcheme could not have ſucceeded, for his philoſophers would have degenerated into men. His diſciple, Porphyry, flouriſhed at Rome under Diocleſian, and was one of the moſt dangerous opponents Chriſtianity ever had. When Conſtantine ſignalized his zeal for the true religion, he ſuppreſſed Porphyry's work againſt it, of which we only have a few fragments preſerved by the fathers, by whom it was refuted. Plotinus and Porphyry.

The idle dreams of the later Platoniſts, the fantaſtic beings with which they filled the world, and the ſuperſtitious myſteries by which they pretended to unite themſelves with the Deity himſelf, ſeem only proper to diſguſt men of ſolid ſenſe. However, the taſte for Platoniſm ſpread even among the Chriſtians, where it gave birth to an abſtruſe captious ſubtilty, whence originated a multitude of opinions equally pernicious to the good of the church and the tranquillity of the ſtate. The Platoniſts formed a myſtic theology, in order to diſguiſe the ſhocking and abſurd doctrines of Paganiſm; and it is to be feared that the Chriſtians, ſtudying their philoſophy in order to combat them, adopted ſome of their ideas, and corrupted the noble ſimplicity of the evangelic faith, by an oſtentatious diſplay of vain ſcience. Later Platoniſts.

ELEVENTH EPOCHA.

CONSTANTINE.

The Seat of the Empire transferred to Conſtantinople, and Chriſtianity eſtabliſhed.

CHAP. I.

Beginning of Conſtantine's Reign.—His Converſion.—The Defeat of Maxentius.

Doubts with regard to the birth of Conſtantine and Helena his mother.

WHETHER Conſtantine the Great was a native of Bythinia or of Britain, or, which is more probable, of Naiſſa in Dardania; whether his mother Helena was of high or low extraction, the wife or concubine of Conſtantius Chlorus, are problems of hiſtory where the diſputants loſe themſelves in the dark. If we confine ourſelves to what is true and uſeful, we will here find ample food for our curioſity. Our attention will be fixed by a new arrangement of affairs; a new capital, a new religion, a new ſyſtem of policy: we ſhall meet with fewer remarkable crimes, leſs blood ſpilt, fewer violent and ſudden revolutions, but more intrigues, treachery, and deep villainy; we ſhall ſee the church triumphant over idolatry, torn by inteſtine quarrels; the empire ſtill ſupporting itſelf by its own weight, though on every ſide nodding to its fall. Such are the principal objects preſented by the age of Conſtantine, and which make it one of the moſt remarkable epochas in hiſtory. The truth is in ſome degree clouded by the frequent contradictions between the Chriſtian and Heathen authors: but let us form our judgment by undoubted facts, and not by panegyrics or ſatires; thus ſhall we acquire knowledge worth our labour.

General idea of his age.

306. Quarrels among the Roman princes.

Conſtantine was about thirty two years of age at his father's death. His majeſtic perſon gave additional luſtre to the great qualities of his heart and head. His

courage

courage was rouſed by ambition; and bravery joined with prudence conducted the projects formed by his deſire of power. Galerius dreaded him, and therefore refuſed him the title of Cæſar, which he conferred on Severus.

The latter found at firſt a rival in Maxentius, ſon of Maximian, who was proclaimed emperour by the city of Rome and the army: but being incapable of ſupporting himſelf by his own ſtrength, he invited his father to reſume the imperial dignity. Maximian, who regretted the loſs of his authority, embraced the propoſal, after having in vain ſolicited Diocleſian to take the ſame ſtep; but he ſtill preferred the culture of his garden, either from an unwillingneſs to renounce the happineſs of retirement, or from not ſeeing any probability of reſtoring tranquillity to the empire. Severus, betrayed by his army, which had been corrupted, was in a ſhort time obliged to open his veins.

Maximian reſumes the title of emperour.

Mean while Maximian dreaded that he would ſoon be overwhelmed by the power of Galerius. He therefore retired into Gaul, where he united Conſtantine to his intereſt, by giving him his daughter in marriage. The arrival of Galerius immediately followed theſe tranſactions. Maxentius employed treachery againſt this rival, and ſeduced great part of his troops, but loſt the opportunity of ſecuring his perſon; and Galerius made his eſcape. Maximian laid hold of this pretence to attempt the depoſition of his ſon, but failed in the enterpriſe, and was obliged to fly from Rome. Enraged to madneſs at his want of ſucceſs, he returned to Conſtantine, and uſed every effort to engage him in the war; but not being able to ſucceed, he joined Galerius himſelf, with a view, as he ſaid, of giving peace to the empire, or more probably with a deſign to raiſe himſelf again by ſome new act of treachery.

Attempts to depoſe his ſon Maxentius, by whom he is driven out of Rome.

One Licinius, a Dacian, of obſcure birth, vicious character, and barbarous manners, without any merit, except his ſkill in war, was named Auguſtus in the room of Severus by Galerius, in preſence of Maximian and Diocleſian,

Behaves treacherouſly to Conſtantine, his ſon in law, who

obliges him to kill himself.

Diocleſian, who conſtantly refuſed to reaſcend the throne. Maximian, the *Cæſar*, enraged at this choice, aſſumed the title of Auguſtus by his own authority. The ſcene was perpetually changing. Maximian, having quarrelled with Galerius, returned to Conſtantine in Gaul, where, in recompenſe for the favours he had received, he plotted againſt his benefactor. Purſued, taken, and again treated with clemency, he attempted the life of that prince, who at laſt forced him to ſtrangle himſelf, and cauſed his ſtatues to be thrown down. The old emperour, who was an enemy to repoſe, to his ſon, his ſon in law, and himſelf, had ſeveral times quitted and reſumed the purple.

310.

Death of Galerius.

The following year Galerius died. The Heathen writers are loud in his praiſes, while the Chriſtian repreſent him as a tyrant. The reaſon is, that he was zealous for Paganiſm, and perſecuted Chriſtianity. However, towards the cloſe of his life, he publiſhed an edict of toleration, which was fixed up in Nicomedia.

Tyranny of Maxentius.

Maxentius, another perſecutor, hated the Chriſtians the more violently as Conſtantine, after the example of Conſtantius Chlorus, ſhewed them favour, either out of clemency or policy. But his tyranny was not confined to them: the whole ſtate groaned under his cruelties and rapines. After defeating Alexander, who had revolted in Africa, he became ſtill more ferocious. Not content with exacting from all ranks, even the loweſt, heavy contributions as free gifts, he practiſed every method of injuſtice and violence, to glut an inſatiable rapacity, which was whetted by the moſt horrid debaucheries. He projected the deſtruction of Conſtantine, under pretence of revenging his father's death; while Conſtantine was meditating his ruin, under colour of freeing Rome from oppreſſion.

311. Conſtantine prepares for war againſt him.

The latter, always prudent and active in his meaſures, neglected nothing to enſure their ſucceſs. He ſecured Gaul from invaſion; won the hearts of the people by new marks of beneficence; and afterwards invited Maxentius to an interview, who anſwered only by cauſing

cauſing his ſtatues to be dragged through the kennels. This was the ſignal of an irreconcilable war. The neceſſity of leaving a large body of troops on the Rhine, deprived Conſtantine of the greateſt part of his forces. His enterpriſe appeared raſh to his officers; his army murmured, and he was obliged to fly to ſome extraordinary reſource.

Embraces Chriſtianity.

In this ſituation, whether his eyes were all at once opened by a ſupernatural light, or the Chriſtians (who were grown very numerous, eſpecially in Gaul) appeared to him proper inſtruments for his deſigns, ambitious men making even religion a political engine, he declared himſelf in favour of Chriſtianity, and fixed the monogram of Jeſus Chriſt on the *Labarum*, which became the principal ſtandard of the Romans. Every one is acquainted with the miraculous apparition of the croſs, related by Euſebius, as the cauſe of his converſion; a miracle, of which, according to that hiſtorian, the whole army was witneſs, though Lactantius does not mention it, and other eccleſiaſtical writers ſpeak of it only as a dream. Several contradictory traditions lay the ſcene in different parts of Gaul, ſome in Italy, even at the gates of Rome. Hence ariſe ſome critical doubts, founded beſides on Euſebius omitting ſo intereſting a fact in his eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, and reſerving it for the life, or rather panegyric, of Conſtantine. He aſſures us, that he had it from the emperour's mouth, which gives the greateſt weight to his teſtimony.

Apparition of of the croſs.

Motives attributed to Conſtantine by Zoſimus.

Zoſimus, however, who was an enemy to the Chriſtian faith, attributes this great change to ſome very ſtrange motives. He pretends that Conſtantine, ſtruck with remorſe for having cruelly put to death his wife and ſon, ſought in the rites of the ancient worſhip an expiation for his crimes; but being anſwered by the idolatrous prieſts, that they knew none efficacious enough to waſh away the guilt of ſuch atrocious deeds, an Egyptian inſinuated to him that among the Chriſtians all crimes, however black, might be expiated in an inſtant; upon which he eagerly embraced a religion favourable

favourable to his deſires. But Zoſimus is refuted by the fact itſelf. Criſpus and Fauſta, ſon and wife of the emperour, were not put to death till the year 326. Beſides, what is more repugnant to the ſpirit of Chriſtianity than an expiation ſo eaſy and momentaneous, in which the heart has no ſhare, while penance, on the contrary was a long continued exerciſe of mortifying virtues?

Advantages of Chriſtianity.

It is not ſurpriſing that enraged idolaters ſhould have blackened a prince who wanted to deſtroy idolatry; but how could mankind be inſenſible to the good promiſed by ſuch a change, the miſtakes from which it would purge the world, and the virtues it would ſpread abroad in it? In truth, we will ſee but too clearly this precious bleſſing corrupted by old vices and new errours. That is to ſay, we will often ſee Chriſtians acting contrary to their own principles. Conſequently while they are condemned by thoſe very principles, their exceſſes will ſerve as teſtimonies in favour of the holy doctrine from which they are unhappy enough to depart.

CHAP. II.

Conſtantine Maſter of Rome.—His firſt Laws.

312. Conſtantine defeats Maxentius, and makes himſelf maſter of Rome.

IN a ſhort time Conſtantine paſſed the Alps; took Suſa, Turin, Verona, Aquileia, Modena, and encamped within two miles of Rome. The cowardly Maxentius, who, though ſuperiour in number, kept himſelf cooped up within the walls, after having diſpelled his fears by a number of ſuperſtitious rites, at laſt took the field, gave battle, was defeated and ſlain. Rome, freed from a tyrant, joyfully received her deliverer; the ſenate dedicated temples to him, and Africa even appointed prieſts to pay divine honours to his family. Policy made him apparently countenance thoſe remains of idolatry.

Uniting

Uniting firmneſs with mildneſs, in order to eſtabliſh his power, he broke the pretorian bands, who were devoted to Maxentius on account of the privileges he had beſtowed on them, and at the ſame time uſed his utmoſt endeavours to cure the miſchiefs of every kind that had been produced by a tyranny of ſix years. The informers, *thoſe execrable peſts*, as he calls them, *the greateſt ſcourge of mankind*, were put to death. The ſenate was re-eſtabliſhed in its rights, the people relieved by his beneficence, Rome and ſeveral other cities repaired or embelliſhed. Paſt misfortunes gave a keener reliſh to the preſent happineſs.

Unites firmneſs with mildneſs.

It is extraordinary that ſome Chriſtian authors, *Theophanes* and *Cedrenus*, commend Conſtantine for a pretended edict, by which he ordered all perſons who perſiſted in the worſhip of idols to be put to death. Could the ſpirit of perſecution have diſhonoured this prince at the very time when he was making himſelf ſo eſtimable by putting an end to that which had been raiſed againſt the church? But he knew too well how neceſſary prudence and mildneſs were, even for the intereſts of Chriſtianity. Far from excerciſing ſeverity againſt the followers of the eſtabliſhed religion, he accepted the title of *Pontifex Maximus**, which was borne by his ſucceſſors till the time of Gratian, as had been the practice of the preceding emperours from the time of Auguſtus.

Does not perſecute the Pagans, as ſome authors have ſuppoſed.

Accepts the title of Pontifex Maximus.

In his firſt edicts he only granted to the Chriſtians the puplic exerciſe of their religion. They enjoyed liberty of conſcience in common with all foreign religions. The ſingle example of the prince could not fail of making illuſtrious converts. Beſides, his zeal prompted him to beſtow favours and largeſſes: he paid great reſpect to the biſhops, and admitted them to his table, though they were diſtinguiſhed only by the ſimplicity of virtue. He erected the palace of Lateran into a cathedral, and preſented it to the biſhop of Rome and his ſucceſſors. (I omit mentioning the imaginary donation of the ſovereignty of Rome and the Weſt; it being an abſurd

Grants the Chriſtians the exerciſe of their religion, with ſeveral favours.

* High prieſt, or head of the church.

absurd fiction, the refutation of which is now needless.)

Exemption of clerks limited.

He built and endowed several churches. He exempted clerks from municipal functions, which were then burthensome. But this exemption tempting some bad citizens to enter into the clerical order, who had no other call than that of self interest, he prohibited any new clerks to be made, except to fill the room of such as died, and ordered them to be chosen from among those who were already exempted from bearing offices by their poverty. His intention was, that the rich should bear the burdens of the state, and the poor be maintained by the wealth of the clergy. He even ordained that those clerks, who by their birth or fortune were destined to those public functions, should quit the service of the church for that of their country. Under his reign the ecclesiastical revenues only were exempted from tribute, not the patrimonies of the clerks; and under his successors this exemption ceased, when the riches of the church appeared sufficient to authorize the clergy being required to contribute to the common necessities of government.

Good civil laws in favour of liberty & natural equity.

Many disorders were remedied by excellent civil laws. Liberty, that primary blessing of mankind, was preserved as far as the usages would permit. The emperour declared, that there was no prescription against liberty, and that sixty years slavery did not deprive a free man of his rights. In general he established it as a maxim, that *more regard ought to be paid to natural equity, than to positive and rigorous law:* reserving to himself, however, the decision of those cases where they could not be reconciled, (Legislation ought to cancel all such.) Convinced, as he expressly says, that the interest of the people is more to be regarded than that of the treasury, he prohibited the debtors to the exchequer from being imprisoned or corporally punished; and ordered the deficiencies of the insolvent to be made up by a repartition upon such as were able. In one word, he checked the oppressions of the farmers of the revenue, who always use the names of princes, even against their will, as a wea-

He checks the oppressions of the

pon

pon for oppreſſing the poor. The ſpeedy adminiſtration of juſtice, the uſe of appeal, the regulations to prevent its abuſe, and other important objects found in Conſtantine's laws, would deſerve a more minute and particular account than can be given in this work, which is confined to eſſentials. farmers of the revenue.

We ſhall often ſee with regret this ſovereign legiſlator ſully his glory by cruelties directly contrary to his maxims. After an expedition againſt the Francs, the braveſt of the German nations, whom he repulſed and drove beyond the Rhine, he exhibited games at Treves, in which the priſoners were expoſed to wild beaſts. He there heard a panegyric filled with ideas entirely Pagan; for the ancient religion ſtill prevailed, and it required no little time, moderation, and wiſdom, to extirpate it. Had Conſtantine followed violent counſels in this matter, he would not only have hazarded the loſs of his crown, perhaps even of his life, but would have injured the progreſs of Chriſtianity, by ſtirring up the hatred of its numerous adverſaries. Conſtantine's cruelty after an expedition againſt the Francs.

CHAP. III.

Maximin defeated by Licinius.—Licinius dethroned by Conſtantine.

MAXIMIN, who reigned in Aſia, and had ſhared his dominions with Licinius, looking upon himſelf as ſole heir of the empire, becauſe he was the only ſurvivor of thoſe who had been nominated by Dioclesian and Maximian at their abdication, formed a deſign of dethroning Licinius and Conſtantine. He paſſed the Boſphorus, which was the boundary that had been ſettled between them, ſeized Byzantium, and laid ſiege to Heraclea, otherwiſe Perinthus. Licinius had juſt married Conſtantine's ſiſter at Milan, when he had advice of this invaſion. He marched againſt his competitor with a much inferiour army, gave him battle and defeated 313. Maximin deſires to make himſelf ſole maſter of the empire.

He periſhes in the attempt.

defeated him. Maximin, being purſued to Tarſus, and loſing all hopes of making his eſcape, ſwallowed a doſe of poiſon, and put an end to a reign which had been a continued ſeries of tyranny, eſpecially againſt the Chriſtians: accordingly Lactantius aſſures us, that Licinius was miraculouſly warned in a dream to venture an engagement.

314. Quarrel and war between Conſtantine and Licinius.

The union between the two emperours was of no long duration: it is not known on which ſide the rupture began; ſome lay the blame on Licinius, others on Conſtantine. The latter arrived in Pannonia, where his colleague was aſſembling his troops, and defeated him in two battles, which were followed by a treaty of partition. The conqueror forced his antagoniſt to cede to him Greece, Macedonia, Pannonia, Dardania, Dacia, all Illyria, and Mæſia Prima. No doubt can be entertained that he was prompted to thoſe conqueſts by his ambition; he eagerly embraced every method of aggrandizing himſelf.

The former, from a motive of ambition, makes his three ſons Cæſars.

Some time after, Conſtantine, in order to fix the empire in his own family, gave the title of Cæſar to his three ſons, Criſpus, Conſtantine and Conſtantius, though the two youngeſt were ſtill infants. *He knew,* ſays the ſophiſt Libanius, *that the human mind takes its bent from its occupations, he was therefore deſirous to educate his children in the noble exerciſe of grandeur, to ſave them from littleneſs of mind, and inſpire their ſouls with ſtrength and vigour; that in adverſity they might not ſink from the height of courage, and in proſperity the elevation of their ſoul might equal that of their fortune.* If Libanius be not miſtaken in Conſtantine's motive, that prince doubtleſs reaſoned unjuſtly; for where one example can be alledged of grandeur producing ſuch effects on young princes, an infinite number may be produced to the contrary. We here ſee Cæſars, leſs than three years old, inveſted with the conſulſhip, and the command of armies. Doubtleſs they were not then ſerving their apprenticeſhip to the art of reigning. But the people were accuſtomed to behold in thoſe children

their

their future ſovereigns; and the right of ſucceſſion, which was before uncertain, might thus be eſtabliſhed.

He publiſhes new laws reſpecting religion.

The emperour, taking advantage of a peace of ſome years duration, publiſhed ſeveral more laws, and applied himſelf to the affairs of Chriſtianity. The puniſhment of crucifixion was aboliſhed, forbearance from labour on Sundays was commanded, except in affairs of agriculture.

Celibacy favoured.

The Papian Poppæan law againſt celibacy was repealed, though the ancient privileges of thoſe who had children were preſerved.

Donations to the church permitted.

The privilege of the veſtals to make bequeſts by will before they were of age, was granted to perſons of both ſexes, who conſecrated themſelves to evangelical virginity. In 321, permiſſion was given for people to bequeath to the church ſuch part of their goods as they pleaſed. Theſe two laſt regulations do not indicate great political foreſight.

The Aruſpices reſtricted.

The Aruſpices retained the privilege of practiſing the impoſtures of their art in the temples, but they were prohibited, under pain of being burnt alive, from entering into private houſes; a reſtriction which the Pagans doubtleſs looked upon as a real perſecution.

Conſtantine forms a deſign to dethrone his colleague.

On the other ſide, Licinius perſecuted the Chriſtians, whom he ſuſpected, not without an appearance of reaſon, to wiſh they had Conſtantine for their maſter. The latter was no leſs deſirous of uniting the empire under his ſole dominion; and the jealouſy of theſe two princes paved the way for ſcenes of blood. Conſtantine having attacked the Goths and Sarmatians, upon his colleague's territories, Licinius complained of it as an infraction of the treaties. This was ſufficient pretence for the former to renew the war.

He makes a pretext of religion.

According to Euſebius himſelf, the pretext of religion being perſecuted, of which his policy availed itſelf, was not a neceſſary motive, as things then ſtood. Ambition might have found others. After ſuch an authority Conſtantine's motives may be judged equivocal. God makes even the paſſions of men ſubſervient to the execution of his eternal decrees.

This

323. He defeats Licinius.

This prince was maſter of a fleet of two hundred galleys, with upwards of two thouſand ſhips of burden, and one hundred and thirty thouſand fighting men. At the head of this formidable force he haſtened to attack Licinius, whoſe Aſiatic troops were far from being able to reſiſt him. He came up with the enemy at Adrianople in Thrace, and having given his army for the watch word, *God the Saviour*, with the ſtandard of the croſs borne before him, he began the engagement, in which he gained a great victory. About the ſame time his ſon Criſpus deſtroyed the enemy's fleet at Gallipoli. Licinius retired to Chalcedon, whither he was purſued by Conſtantine, and a treaty of peace was concluded; but the emperour of the Eaſt aſſembling new forces, the war was ſoon rekindled. Licinius, being defeated a ſecond time at Chryſopolis, and beſieged in Nicomedia, was obliged to lay down the purple, and ſent priſoner to Theſſalonica, with a promiſe of his life; but he was ſoon after ſtrangled. The partiſans of Conſtantine ſuppoſe Licinius to have been guilty of ſome unknown crime. But why is that crime unknown? Why do they ſtick to vague ſuſpicions? Why not acknowledge that ſuch acts of violence againſt a prince, whoſe very misfortunes made him an object of reſpect, can be authorized only by the maxims of a barbarous policy?

Puts him to death, after promiſing him his life.

CHAP. IV.

Affairs of the Church.

Conſtantine haraſſes the idolaters, and yet recommends toleration.

CONSTANTINE, being now ſole maſter of the empire, gave a greater looſe to his zeal for Chriſtianity. He prohibited the Heathens from offering ſacrifices, threw down and ſhut up a great number of temples; at the ſame time that he publiſhed an edict, in the Eaſt, declaring that it was not his deſire to trouble the peace of any perſon, exhorting his ſubjects to mutual toleration, and diſapproving the zeal of ſuch as

wanted

wanted to make the practice of the ancient religion criminal. Egypt retained its gods and worship. Paganism kept its ground in Rome, and in a great part of the empire under the protection of the senate. But it was no small matter that the cross was honoured at court, that the worshippers of the true God enjoyed the favour of the prince, and that the others were kept in awe, without daring to shew their hatred and resentment. The advantage would have been more solid, had the emperour's piety been more enlightened. While he was composing wretched discourses unsuitable to his dignity, he gave himself up to the counsels of rapacious and dishoneſt men, who abused the confidence he reposed in them, in order to gratify their passions. The state was a prey to rapine and injustice, though so many judicious laws had been made against them; and notwithstanding his great zeal for religion, theological wars sprung up around the throne through the imprudence of the prince, and committed dreadful ravages in the church. We shall give a general idea of this fatal mischief, by considering its influence on public order, the morals, and the understanding of mankind; for theological matters come not within our plan.

Abuses very common, notwithstanding his laws.

Theological disputes very dangerous.

The more we study the doctrine of Jesus Christ and the apostles, the more clearly we see that its only tendency is to make men holy and happy. The Saviour of the world had reduced the whole law to two precepts, which form the basis of the gospel: *Love God above all things*; *love thy neighbour as thyself*. Universal charity was the soul of Christianity. It was designed to detach men from this world by the sacrifice of their inordinate passions, but to unite them to one another by a pure and perfect love. It made the social duties an essential means of salvation. It equally condemned selfishness, voluptuousness, enmity, and discord. St. Paul had even forbidden in severe terms every question proper to excite vain disputes; and nothing appeared farther distant from the spirit of Christianity than a bitter, arrogant and obstinate zeal, which, under pretence of the service of God, would excite discord in the church or state. While

The Christian religion breathed only charity.

The primitive Christians were equally passive & virtuous.

While the Christians were few in number, and afterwards when persecution served as fuel to their virtue, the doctrines of the gospel were followed with the primitive ardour. If any dispute arose, the decision of the apostles and the bishops their successors, easily solved the difficulty. The professors of that religion were plain and modest, they did not plume themselves on their knowledge. Instead of arguing on the mysteries, they practised the duties, of morality; they were Christians by the humility of their faith, and still more by the goodness of their works.

But the passions corrupted the primitive virtue.

But the church having silently made great progress, and all sorts of persons having brought into it their passions and prejudices, the peace it enjoyed under several princes having produced a relaxation of manners, and a relish for the vanities of the world, some presumptuous Christians were inflamed with an ambitious desire of dictating to their brethren. The Greeks, especially those of Alexandria, being naturally sophists, were desirous to discuss, to analyze, and to illustrate, the doctrines of faith; they introduced into theology the taste and ideas of Platonism. This was subjecting divine truths to all the caprices of opinion. On the other side some enthusiasts, sticking close to the letter of the scripture, and zealously addicted to an absurd rigour, inconsistent with human nature, became so much more dangerous, as by the language and externals of piety they easily drew aside the people, and joined an inflexibility of temper to a heated imagination.

A spirit of sophistry and rigour, the two sources of the sects.

The Christian sects necessarily more turbulent than those of the philosophers.

Hence sprung sects very different from those of the philosophers. These last formed no distinct body, nor had they any influence on the vulgar; they submitted their systems to the calm examination of reason, they disputed on matters indifferent to the generality; or at least, if they attacked the national superstitions, it was covertly, in a circle of disciples, and readers who for the most contented themselves with thinking, and formed no cabals. The generality of those philosophers may be reproached with being conceited sophists,

and

and uſeleſs to their country; but they could not be charged with diſturbing public order.

On the other hand the principal ſectaries, being miniſters of religion, and pretending to be interpreters of the will of Heaven, erecting their own miſtakes into doctrines of faith, and inculcating them upon the people as the eſſentials of religion, eaſily inſpired them with a contagious fanaticiſm, from whoſe effects it was difficult to be ſecured if their errours were combated. Hence the ſects were naturally enemies; and ſometimes the orthodox, by an exceſſive zeal, irritated their hatred and audacity.

Conſtantine had no ſooner declared himſelf protector of the faith, than thoſe diſputes burſt out with violence. It was a matter of very great importance to prevent their effects, and for this purpoſe it was neceſſary to obſerve a conduct equally firm and moderate. Above all it was requiſite to avoid violent meaſures, which could only inflame the minds of the people. It was the buſineſs of the prieſts to judge in ſpiritual affairs; of the prince to watch over the peace and order of the community. As ſoon as animoſity and enthuſiaſm began to ferment, the ſpirit of party would infallibly take wing, throw itſelf into convulſions, and overleap all bounds. Conſtantine experienced this during his whole reign. He made eccleſiaſtical diſputes affairs of ſtate: far from calming them, he rendered them more fierce and obſtinate.

Conſtantine had not prudence enough to prevent its effects.

The ſchiſm of the Donatiſts, which owed its riſe to the ordination of the biſhop Cecilianus, whom his enemies accuſed of being a *traditor*, i. e. of having given up the ſcriptures in the time of perſecution; that ſchiſm filled Africa with diſcord and ſcandal. The emperour aſſembled a council at Rome, and afterwards another at Arles, in the year 314, in order to decide this diſpute; he exclaimed againſt the *impudence* of the Donatiſts, who appealed to his tribunal from the ſentence of the biſhops. However, ſome time after he tried the cauſe himſelf. The ſchiſm degenerated into hereſy, and gave birth to the

Schiſm of the donatiſts.

the barbarous fanaticiſm of the Circoncellions. Theſe fanatics flew to arms, in order to ſet the ſlaves at liberty, and force creditors to diſcharge their debtors.

Hereſy of Arius. Soon after the hereſy of Arius, a prieſt of Alexandria, who denied the divinity of Jeſus Chriſt, opened an inexhauſtible ſpring of quarrels and miſchiefs. Some biſhops attached to the court, particularly Euſebius of Nicomedia, and Euſebius of Cæſarea (author of the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory) both favourers of Arianiſm,* had great influence over the mind of the emperour. The former of them perſuaded him that the controverſy was merely about words: in conſequence of which, he wrote to the biſhop of Alexandria, and to the hereſiarch, exhorting them to peace and ſilence, comparing their diſpute to that between philoſophers of the ſame ſect, who differed in ſome points, though they agreed in the eſſentials. His letter produced no effect. The quarrel growing more violent, and Oſius, the celebrated biſhop of Cordova, having prevailed upon him to act with more firmneſs, he publiſhed an invective of his own compoſition againſt the Arians; a declamation in every reſpect unworthy of his majeſty, and only calculated for diſguſting the reader. After this no meaſures were kept; the biſhops and the people ſplit into ſcandalous diviſions; the ſtatues of the emperour were inſulted by the ſectaries, and he was exhorted to revenge the inſult. *I*, cried he, clapping his hand to his face, *do not feel myſelf hurt*. This moderation indicates a great ſoul; his conduct in ſeveral reſpects ſhews a littleneſs of mind.

Conſtantine treats it as a vain diſpute, and publiſhes an invective againſt the Arians.

They behave ſeditiouſly.

25. Council of Nice. At laſt he aſſembled the general council of Nice in Bithynia. The biſhops were ſummoned to it from all parts of the empire, and all the expenſes of their journey defrayed. Three hundred and eighteen prelates, among whom are reckoned ſeventeen Arians, decided, in preſence of the emperour, that the Son of God was *conſubſtantial* with the Father. The writings of Arius were condemned.

* The authority of Euſebius as an hiſtorian is very great in all matters which do not concern the doctrines of faith: it certainly would be of much more weight had he been orthodox.

condemned. Conſtantine prohibited every perſon from keeping them, under pain of death; yet he only baniſhed the author, which ſeems a contradictory conduct. Mr. Le Beau ſays in his excuſe, that he was much more ſevere againſt future than paſt crimes; and that by the event, the penalties enacted in his laws became only comminatory. But was it not dangerous to eſtabliſh laws without deſiring to put them in execution? The ſubjects were accuſtomed to regard capital puniſhment ordained by the laws only as a form of words, which was indifferently applied to every thing. We ſhall ſee this imprudence, which became ſtill more common under the following reigns, productive of much miſchief to the legiſlative power and the public good.

Prohibition under pain of death againſt keeping the books of Arius, though he was only baniſhed.

A queſtion, which at firſt view ſeems of ſmall importance, raiſed keen diſputes among the Chriſtians. Some wanted to celebrate Eaſter after the manner of the Jews, on the day of the full moon in March; others the Sunday after the full moon. The council gave judgment in favour of the latter; but this produced another ſchiſm.

Diſpute concerning Eaſter.

The Arians obſtinately refuſed to ſubmit to the deciſion of the church; and we ſhall ſee Conſtantine himſelf contribute, by the commiſſion of new faults, to the progreſs which rendered that hereſy ſo fatal.

CHAP. V.

Building of Conſtantinople.—End of this Reign.

THE emperour, having returned to Rome after a long abſence, committed in that city two crimes of ſo black a dye as never can be effaced. His eldeſt ſon Criſpus, a prince of high reputation, being accuſed by his ſtep-mother Fauſta, of having declared a paſſion for her, his father, without further examination, ordered him to be put to death. The public openly expreſſed their indignation; and the empreſs, being in her turn

Conſtantine puts his ſon & wife to death without trial.

charged with an infamous correſpondence, was in like manner put to death on a bare accuſation.

Being deteſted at Rome, he quits the city.

Several people of diſtinguiſhed rank periſhed without any known reaſon. Licinius the Younger, a boy of twelve years of age, was in the number of victims. In conſequence of ſo many acts of cruelty, a *placard* was affixed to the gates of the palace, in which that prince was deſcribed as a ſecond Nero. Rome reſounded with reproaches and curſes againſt him; and the populace had the audacity to inſult him; at laſt he took a final leave of that city, which equally deteſted his religion and his perſon.

329. He ſettles at Byzantium, and gives it his own name.

Having formed the reſolution of building a new capital, he firſt caſt his eyes upon ancient Troy, whoſe name was ſo dear to the Romans; but he preferred Byzantium for the excellence of its ſituation on the Thracian Boſphorus, being ſeparated from Aſia by a ſtrait of only ſeven ſtadia*, and enriched with all the gifts of nature. He greatly enlarged its compaſs, erected ſuperb edifices, made it a ſecond Rome, gave it the name of Conſtantinople, and ſacrificed to it the intereſts of the empire.

Pernicious privileges granted to that city.

In order to people it, he deprived all the landholders in Aſia of the natural right of diſpoſing of their eſtates, even by will, unleſs they had a houſe in that city. All kinds of privileges, and diſtributions of corn, oil, wine, were laviſhed on thoſe who fixed their reſidence there.

The Alexandrian fleet, which furniſhed Rome with corn, Campania being converted into gardens, was deſtined to furniſh Conſtantinople, whence Athens formerly drew its ſubſiſtence. Fourſcore thouſand meaſures of wheat were diſtributed among the people every day. In a ſhort time the Aſiatic fleets joined to the Egyptian were inſufficient for the ſupply of the new city.

Hateful Impoſts.

Burdenſome and infamous impoſts were levied not only on merchandiſe, but upon ordure, which none could carry away without purchaſing a licence; brothels, animals, and even dogs, were taxed. Thoſe impoſts,

* The ſtadium is about ſix hundred French feet.

poſts, the invention of which is attributed by Zoſimus to Conſtantine, though ſome of them had been eſtabliſhed in former times, ſcarce defrayed the profuſe expenſes. Rome loſt a great number of its principal citizens, who were infallibly drawn to the court; it loſt its riches, its luſtre, its power, though they were then neceſſary to ſtop the invaſion of the barbarians.

Rome depopulated and impoveriſhed

It ſhewed great ignorance of the intereſts of the empire, ſays Abbé Mably, *to build a new capital, while the preſervation of the ancient was ſo difficult; to throw away immenſe ſums in erecting a magnificent city, while the empire, exhauſted by all the ſcourges it had felt, could with difficulty maintain its armies.* The new government eſtabliſhed by Conſtantine was an evil of ſtill greater magnitude. We ſhall only deſcribe its principal features, which it is of importance to conſider.

Conſtantinople ruined the empire.

The ſame ranks and offices were eſtabliſhed at Conſtantinople as at Rome. But the ſenate had not the ſame weight in affairs of government. Though under bad princes the Roman ſenate was enſlaved, at leaſt the ſhadow of that illuſtrious body wore a majeſtic and commanding appearance; and from time to time it reſumed a portion of its principles, with part of its authority. On the contrary, the ſenate of Conſtantinople being from the time of its inſtitution a ſlave to the court, the government became arbitrary, offices loſt their dignity, and legiſlation fell into the hands of a ſingle man.

The ſenate of that city without authority in the government.

The erection of two capitals naturally produced a diviſion of the empire. The Eaſtern comprehended all the countries from the Danube to the remoteſt borders of Egypt, and from the Adriatic gulf to the frontiers of Perſia. The emperour thought proper, after the example of Diocleſian, to ſubdivide that vaſt body. He created four *præfecti prætorii*, who had each the government of a certain diſtrict; theſe conſiſted of a number of provinces, which were called *dioceſes*. The four prefectures were thoſe of the Eaſt, Illyria, Italy, and Gaul; (with Spain, Mauritania, Tingitana, and Britain.)

Two empires as well as two capitals.

Four prefectures & their dioceſes.

Britain.) And theſe provinces had peculiar governours, who were dependent on the prefect. Dukes and counts were appointed for the defence of the frontiers. They and their troops had ſome lands of the barbarous nations aſſigned them, which were called *Marches*, and might be tranſmitted to their heirs if they bore arms. Theſe lands went by the title of benefices. As to the *præfecti prætorii*, who were at firſt the miniſters and lieutenants of the ſovereign, their office became purely civil; they adminiſtered juſtice, and had the care of the revenue.

Dukes & counts.

Benefices.

Maſters of the militia.

Patricians

Conſtantine ſubſtituted in their room two maſters of the militia; and ſtill more to leſſen a dignity which had been once ſo formidable, he eſtabliſhed an order of patricians, who, though they bore no office, were ſuperiour in rank to the prefects.

The new government, being too complicated, was ſubject to a thouſand abuſes.

It is evident at firſt ſight, that by an exceſſive multiplication of dignities, he overloaded the revenue; that it was almoſt impoſſible to maintain harmony in ſo complicated an adminiſtration; in a word, that ſo conſiderable a change muſt have drawn on numberleſs inconveniences, in a ſtate already ruined, whoſe parts were ready to fall to pieces of themſelves, and whoſe head was unable to make the members act with ſufficient vigour. It was an old decayed building, which tottered on every ſide, when an attempt was made to alter its plan.

The troops withdrawn from the frontiers to garriſon the towns.

Zoſimus reproaches Conſtantine with having drawn off the troops deſtined to repulſe the barbarians from the frontiers, and placing them in garriſon in the cities. *This*, according to Monteſquieu, *produced two evils; one, the removal of the barrier which reſtrained ſo many nations; and the other, the ſoldiers becoming effeminate, by frequenting the circus and theatre.* Diſcipline was entirely enervated by their reſiding in cities.

Titles endleſsly multiplied.

Among the pernicious abuſes may be ranked thoſe titles of vanity, which were endleſſly multiplied; *Noble*, *Moſt Noble*, *Illuſtrious*, *Moſt Illuſtrious*, *Moſt Perfect*, *Sublimity*, *Excellency*, *Magnificence*, *Greatneſs*, *Eminence*, *Reverence*, &c. As falſe greatneſs inſpires littleneſs of

ſoul,

ſoul, all ideas were centred in a trifling ceremonial; *minutiæ*, words, took place of things; the glare of titles darkened the luſtre of merit. What the Scipios, the Julius Cæſars, would have regarded as matter of ridicule, were the only objects of deſire and attention to the greateſt men. The reſult of it, littleneſs of mind.

Conſtantine ſet an example of this affectation of dignity; he always wore the diadem; his robes glittered with pearls; the pomp of his court and magnificence of his feſtivals breathed the Aſiatic luxury. A ſtrange method of repairing the breaches of the empire, and ſecuring the proſperity of Conſtantinople! Pride of Conſtantine.

In the reſt of his reign we find more ſubject for cenſure than praiſe. He gained a great victory over the Goths, but he raiſed many of them to dignities, and in ſome meaſure opened a paſſage into the empire to the barbarians. The Goths defeated & admitted to dignities.

He received the ambaſſadours of Sapor II. king of Perſia, with whoſe preparations for war he was not unacquainted; but he contented himſelf with writing to him in favour of the Chriſtian religion, which was perſecuted by that prince; and ſent him a quantity of iron to forge arms. He requeſted the prayers of the biſhops, and of the famous St Anthony, a hermit of Thebais; but he put to death the philoſopher Sopater, whoſe crime, if we may credit Eunapius, was his deſire of reforming the manners of the court: the courtiers accuſed him of magic, in order to get rid of him. Iron imprudently ſent to the Perſians. The philoſopher Sopater unjuſtly put to death.

At laſt, after ſo many inſtances of ſeverity againſt the Arians, he gave himſelf up to an Arian prieſt; recalled Arius and his followers from baniſhment; admitted their falſe profeſſions of faith, and protected them openly. He wanted to oblige St. Athanaſius, biſhop of Alexandria, to receive the hereſiarch; and, wearied with his refuſals, lent his ear to calumny, and baniſhed that inflexible defender of the council of Nice, who had been declared guilty by the packed councils of Tyre and Jeruſalem. Arians protected.

Sapor had already put the iron, with which he was imprudently ſupplied, to its proper uſe. He demanded back

back the five provinces which had been ceded to Galerius; and, meeting with a refuſal, ravaged Meſopotamia, and inſulted the Roman empire.

337. Conſtantine dies in Aſia.

The emperour, at the age of ſixty three, entered Aſia, and repulſed the enemy. He then fell dangerouſly ill, and received baptiſm; (Why at ſo late an age?) put his will into the hands of an Arian prieſt, who enjoyed his confidence, and died at Nicomedia, after a reign of thirty years. He has been honoured as a ſaint by ſeveral churches; and the Greeks and Muſcovites celebrate his feſtival on the twenty firſt of May.

Character of that prince.

Whatever praiſes Conſtantine may deſerve for the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, the ſtains with which his glory is tarniſhed are indelible. Facts ſpeak, and them we have related. His political abilities do not outweigh his faults. *With ſome genius for war*, (this is the judgment formed of him by the Abbé Mably) *which he employed only for the deſtruction of his private enemies, and not thoſe of the empire, he poſſeſſed no one quality proper for government. Duped by his miniſters and favourites, he ſaw only with their eyes. A natural reſtleſſneſs of temper kept him in perpetual motion, though his purſuits were often fruitleſs. If he ſeemed conſtantly engaged in grand projects, the conception of them indicated weakneſs and preſumption, and their execution ſhewed him an indifferent politician. He contributed more than any other to haſten the ruin of the empire.*

Euſebius, his panegyriſt, much to be ſuſpected.

His virtues are extolled to the ſkies by Euſebius of Cæſarea; but a panegyriſt is ſeldom a hiſtorian. That biſhop, who had all the qualities of a courtier, carried his diſſimulation ſo far, in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, as not to mention either Arius or his ſect, nor ſpeak of the principal object of the Nicene council, though he gives a long deſcription of it in his life of Conſtantine, and limits its deciſions to the controverſy about the celebration of Eaſter. It is ſtrange that ſo reſpectable a writer ſhould have committed this unpardonable fault. The Pagans likewiſe have blackened Conſtantine by their ſatire more than the others have extolled him by their flatteries. According to Victor the Younger, during

The Pagans are ſo likewiſe.

the

the firſt ten years of his reign he was a great prince, during the ten following a robber, and during the ten laſt a prodigal. Euſebius himſelf acknowledges that his exceſſive eaſineſs let looſe two great vices, violence, oppreſſive of the weak, in order to ſatiate the ever craving avidity of the powerful, and the hypocriſy of pretended Chriſtians, who entered into the church in order to court his favour. *(Fleury.)* We may form a proper eſtimate of that emperour, ſays the judicious Abbé, by believing the faults aſcribed to him by Euſebius, and the good ſpoken of him by Zoſimus.

In the Theodoſian code a law is aſcribed to him, conſtituting the biſhops judges without appeal, in all cauſes brought before their tribunal by either of the parties. This law, which is repugnant to civil order, is rejected by the beſt authors as ſuppoſititious. Doth Cujas ſhew ſufficient diſcernment, when he defends it by alledging the virtue and juſtice of the biſhops in thoſe times? Their intrigues, their packed councils, their numerous exceſſes, would rather prove it to have been even then neceſſary to reſtrain them within the limits of their ſpiritual authority. There were many holy prelates, whoſe judgment muſt, without doubt, have been perfectly conformable to charity and juſtice: but how many others gave themſelves up to paſſion and prejudice!

It is falſely ſuppoſed that he made the biſhops judges without appeal.

CONSTANTIUS,

And his Two BROTHERS.

CHAP. I.

To the Time when Julian was created Cæſar.

CONSTANTINE had imprudently divided the empire among his three ſons and two of his nephews. Theſe laſt, Dalmatius and Hannibalion, were maſſacred by the ſoldiers after their uncle's death, together

337. Maſſare of Conſtantine's nephews and brothers.

ther with his two brothers, five other of his nephews, and his principal courtiers.

It is not to be doubted that this horrible maſſacre was commanded or directed by ambition. It is aſcribed to Conſtantius, the emperour's younger and beſt beloved ſon, though leaſt deſerving of his affection. How is it poſſible that a prince, whoſe talents for politics are commended by ſome writers, ſhould not have foreſeen, that by making five ſovereigns he not only ruined the empire, but kindled the flames of war in his own family?

Diviſion of the empire among his three ſons, Conſtantine, Conſtantius & Conſtans.

The three brothers made a new diviſion, in which were comprehended the ſpoils of their couſins. Conſtantine, the eldeſt, kept Gaul, Great Britain, Spain, and probably made an acquiſition of Thrace and Conſtantinople, which he ſoon ceded to Conſtantius, who was maſter of all Aſia and Egypt. Conſtans, the youngeſt, had Italy, Illyria, Africa, Macedonia, and Greece.

The eldeſt was only twenty years of age; and none of them appeared to poſſeſs talents fit for government.

It was obſerved, that Commodus was the only emperour who had been born during the reign of his father; and unfavourable preſages were made of thoſe princes who, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, breathed the pride of ſovereignty from their cradle.

Laws againſt informers.

However, they jointly enacted ſome good laws, particularly againſt informers, who had multiplied prodigiouſly. After their father's example, they forbid anonymous libels being regarded as evidence in a court of juſtice.

Conſtantius ſays in one of his laws, *The man is to be regarded as innocent who has enemies, but no accuſers.* But unleſs juſtice prevail in the courts, informations will continue.

War between Conſtantine and Conſtans.

Soon after, Conſtantine, who was diſcontented with his ſhare, and had ſome pretenſions on Italy, being unable to obtain any thing from his brother Conſtans by negotiation, had recourſe to arms, and paſſed the Alps in the year 340. His brother, now become his enemy,

was

was then in Dacia; from whence he ſent an army, which he propoſed to follow with the greateſt forces he could raiſe, when Conſtantine fell into an ambuſcade, was defeated and ſlain; and Conſtans remained ſole maſter of the Weſt. His reign was inglorious; he was a ſlave to his pleaſures and his flatterers; and though he juſtly drew upon himſelf ſome encomiums from the Chriſtians for his protection of the Catholic religion, his conduct was in other reſpects ſtained with vices which the Pagans have painted with all the acrimony of hatred.

Death of the firſt.

In the year 350 Magnentius, a German, and manumitted ſlave, who was at the head of two legions, formed a conſpiracy againſt him at Autun, and cauſed himſelf to be proclaimed Auguſtus. The emperour received intelligence of the revolt while he was at a hunting match, and attempted to eſcape into Spain, but was aſſaſſinated on the road.

The ſecond aſſaſſinated.

In the interval between theſe revolutions, the troubles occaſioned by the Arians continued with more violence than ever. Conſtantius had declared in their favour, and his brothers had ſided with the Catholics. St. Athanaſius, who had been reſtored to the ſee of Alexandria, did not remain long undiſturbed. The accuſations againſt him were renewed; he was condemned and depoſed by a council held at Antioch; and Gregory, who was named his ſucceſſor, forcibly took poſſeſſion of the ſee. The biſhops were filled with rage againſt each other; diſcord univerſally prevailed; and the Eaſt and Weſt were divided, forgetting that religion, inſtead of being a cauſe of quarrel, ought to have been a bond to unite them. A general council ſeemed the moſt proper means for conciliating theſe feuds. It was aſſembled at Sardica, on the borders of the two empires; but the Orientals, finding themſelves the weakeſt, ſeparated from the Weſtern prelates, and held their aſſembly at Philippopolis in Thrace. The deciſions of the two councils were contradictory; they reciprocally acquitted and anathematized the ſame perſons. That compoſed of the Arian biſhops took the name of the

Continual diſturbances cauſed by the Arian controverſy.

Two councils at Sardica. 347.

council of Sardica as well as the other. Hence it comes that St. Auguſtine, being unacquainted with the orthodox council, has mentioned that of Sardica as an aſſembly of heretics.

The word *conſubſtantial* and the cauſe of St. Athanaſius united.

We ſhall not trace this diſpute through its tedious windings. It is ſufficient to obſerve, that it would have kindled a war between Conſtans and Conſtantius, had not the latter yielded to the eſtabliſhment of Athanaſius; and that the Catholics would have been ſatisfied with the Confeſſion of Faith given by the Arians, had not theſe obſtinately perſiſted in rejecting the term *conſubſtantial*. That word, which was become ſacred, and the perſonal cauſe of Athanaſius, were pepetual objects of diſſenſion. The reaſon of which was, that *conſubſtantiality* actually made an eſſential part of the orthodox doctrine, and Athanaſius was perſecuted as the moſt zealous defender of that doctrine.

348. Sapor II. king of Perſia, becomes the terrour of the Romans.

Conſtantius, from the beginning of his reign, had a powerful enemy in Sapor II. king of Perſia, who grew more formidable, as the emperour gave himſelf up entirely to theological controverſy, and neglected the affairs of ſtate. The Perſians routed him at the battle of Singara, became the terrour of the Romans, and ravaged Meſopotamia. Sapor laid ſiege to Niſibis, which he continued with incredible vigour for four months; nor did he raiſe it at laſt but to oppoſe an invaſion of the barbarians. This prince perſecuted the Chriſtians from motives of policy. Formerly, in times of perſecution, Perſia had afforded them an aſylum; but after their religion, by the zeal of Conſtantine, had been eſtabliſhed in the empire, they were looked upon with a ſuſpicious eye, and treated as public enemies.

The reaſon of his perſecuting the Chriſtians

350. War between Conſtantine & the uſurper Magnentius.

Magnentius enjoyed the fruits of his uſurpation in the Weſt. Nepotian, a nephew of Conſtantine, who had eſcaped the maſſacre of his family, attempting to ſeize upon the city of Rome, had periſhed, together with his mother, and his principal partiſans. Vetranion, an old experienced general, though ſo illiterate that he could not even read, had been proclaimed Auguſtus

guſtus in Pannonia, but wanted the qualifications neceſſary for maintaining his high fortune. Conſtantius at laſt marched from Aſia, at the head of all his forces, in order to deprive Magnentius of his dominions. It is pretended that he exhorted his ſoldiers to receive baptiſm; and he has been made to expreſs himſelf in the following terms: *If any man refuſes to be baptized, let him retire. I deſire to have no ſoldiers who are not enrolled under the banners of Jeſus Chriſt.* But as he himſelf was not baptized till at the point of death, is there not ſome reaſon to doubt of ſuch demonſtrations of zeal?

Vetranion had entered into a league with Magnentius, and marched againſt the emperour; but inſtead of coming to an engagement, entered into a treaty, in which he was duped by Conſtantius, who debauched his troops, and forced him to abdicate his authority. It is ſaid that he conſoled him with an extraordinary piece of morality, conceived in theſe terms:—*You loſe only an inſignificant name, which has nothing real but the mortifications it brings with it; and you are going to enjoy ſolid happineſs, without a mixture of uneaſineſs.* It is added, that the good old man, charmed with his retirement, ſent him a letter containing the following words: —*You are wrong in not taking a ſhare in that felicity which you have the art of procuring for others.* Such men had a claim to the title of philoſophers. They either affected that character, or the hiſtorians have ſpoken for them.

Vetranion, leagued with Magnentius, ſuffers himſelf to be deceived.

While the unwarlike Conſtantius was amuſing himſelf with holding a council at Sirmium, Magnentius approached at the head of his army. When ready to paſs the Save, he was met by an envoy from the emperour, with propoſals of peace, which he rejected, and advanced to Murſa on the Drave, the deſtined ſcene of a celebrated action, deciſive of the fate of the empire. The battle was fought with great fury; more than fifty thouſand of the beſt troops were cut to pieces; Magnentius's Gauls performed wonders, and were ſlain almoſt to a man; but at laſt the uſurper turned his back, after having

351. Victory at Murſa over Magnentius.

having loſt Marcellinus, to whom he was indebted for his promotion.

Cowardice of Conſtantius, and impoſture of an Arian biſhop.

Conſtantius did not appear in the field, but with trembling expectation waited the event of the engagement in a neighbouring church, where he was attended by the Arian biſhop of Murſa. That crafty impoſtor had taken proper precautions to be informed of the ſucceſs; and all at once proclaimed the victory, pretending that the news had been brought to him by an angel. The emperour, giving entire credit to the miracle, honoured him as a ſaint, and attributed to him all the ſucceſs of his arms. It is eaſy to judge what groſs errours in conduct muſt ſpring from ſuch low ſuperſtition. We ſhall ſee Conſtantius ſtriking upon all the ſhoals of credulity and weakneſs.

Deſpair & death of Magnentius.

The year following, Magnentius, who for his cruel tyranny was an object of univerſal deteſtation at Rome, took refuge in Gaul, was defeated in Dauphine by the emperour's generals, and perceiving that his ſoldiers were reſolved to deliver him up, in a tranſport of deſpair murdered his couſins, his friends, and even his mother, after which he ſtabbed himſelf with his own ſword.

353. Conſtantius abandons himſelf to the direction of the eunuchs, & tyranniſes over his ſubjects.

As ſoon as Conſtantius was delivered from this enemy, he became more deſpicable and cruel than ever. A continual prey to his ſuſpicions, every thing was to him an object of dread; and his terrours and diſtruſt were increaſed by the vile eunuchs with whom his palace was filled (for the infamous cuſtom of keeping eunuchs had found its way into the court with the other abuſes of Oriental deſpotiſm.) Under pretence of deſtroying the uſurper's party, he exerciſed the moſt odious tyranny. The encouragement of informers produced the ordinary effects; for one criminal a thouſand innocent perſons were put to death. The eunuch Paul, ſecretary, or rather *ſatellite*, of the prince, filled every quarter of the empire with marks of his injuſtice, and raiſed a general alarm. Great Britain was the principal ſcene of his barbarous inquiſition. Martinus, its governor, ſenſibly touched with the miſeries of the public, and foreſeeing

The eunuch Paul infamous for his acts of injuſtice.

foreſeeing that he would one day be involved in them in his turn, formed a deſign to rid the world of this ſavage monſter, but failed in the attempt, and laid violent hands on himſelf. All ſentences of death, which according to cuſtom were preſented to the emperour, were confirmed without exception; and the empreſs Euſebia dared not ſolicit the pardon even of a ſingle perſon. The tyrannical orders and caprices of the court ſtruck more terrour than the invaſions of the Francs, Alemains, and other barbarians.

Gallus, made Cæſar, likewiſe oppreſſes the Eaſt.

The Eaſt was ſtill more oppreſſed under the government of Gallus, nephew of Conſtantine the Great, who, after having been kept ſix years with his brother Julian in a kind of captivity in Cappadocia, was promoted to the dignity of Cæſar, married to the emperour's ſiſter, and ſent againſt the Perſians. He was a man of an unfeeling temper, utterly deſtitute of abilities, naturally ſurpaſſing Conſtantine in cruelty, which was inflamed by his wife Conſtantia, a woman of a diſpoſition as inhuman as his own; and in a court filled with flatterers and villains he became a mercileſs tyrant.

He filled Antioch and the whole Eaſt with murders; cauſed Domitian, prefect of the province, to be aſſaſſinated, under a falſe pretence of a conſpiracy; and gave up the innocent to the rage of informers, to tortures and to death.

Conſtantius attempts to deſtroy him, and ſucceeds.

This violent conduct gave umbrage to Conſtantius. He was afraid that Cæſar deſigned to make himſelf independent, and employed inſinuations and the moſt preſſing inſtances to prevail on him to come to Italy. Gallus foreſaw the danger; it is even conjectured that he entertained ſome deſigns of revolting; but his ſchemes miſcarried, and he found himſelf under a neceſſity of ſetting out. His wife, in whom he placed all his hopes, was ſent before him, but ſhe died on the road. He was arreſted at Pettau in Noricum, and his head cut off.

Conſtantius, being now intoxicated with his power, aſſumed the titles of *Maſter of the World*, and *Eternal*.

This

This riduculous pride was accompanied with all the refinements of tyranny. Never had informers ſo fair a field for diſplaying their villainy. Dreams were made capital crimes. The perſons who were imprudent enough to diſcloſe them ran the hazard of their lives, if what they had dreamed could poſſibly be ſuſceptible of a ſiniſter interpretation. An informer, the worthy miniſter of the infamous Paul, was ludicrouſly ſtyled the *count of dreams*, becauſe he employed himſelf with a good deal of ſucceſs in that branch. The malignity of mankind ſeemed to increaſe in proportion to the univerſal degeneracy.

Dreams made criminal.

When meanneſs and prejudice guide the pen, what will it not be guilty of? Some panegyriſts have praiſed Conſtantius for his clemency, and ſeveral eccleſiaſtical writers beſtow the higheſt encomiums upon Gallus. Mr. Le Beau has judiciouſly remarked, that this is owing to his firm adherence to the true religion, from which his brother Julian apoſtatized. If he was guided by the counſels of Aetius, a celebrated Arian, and conſequently was a bad Catholic, at leaſt he always remained within the pale of Chriſtianity, and his vices and tyranny were veiled under an external ſhew of piety. How prone are we to fall into errour when we conſider objects only in one point of view! Ammianus Marcellinus, an author generally eſteemed for his judgment and veracity, who was an eye witneſs of the tranſactions he relates, confutes by facts thoſe panegyrics which were dictated by the ſpirit of party or adulation. Facts are certain proofs; praiſes are frequently only the language of deceit; of this we have here a remarkable example.

Falſe eulogiums on Conſtantius & Gallus.

The ſophiſt Themiſtius, having been made a ſenator of Conſtantinople, in recompenſe pronounced a panegyric on Conſtantius, in which he extols him as the greateſt philoſopher of the empire. So impudently is truth ſometimes ſported with.

The ſophiſt Themiſtius.

This prince was as eminent in politics as in philoſophy: he had two great generals left, Urſicinus, who had ſignalized himſelf in the Eaſt, and Sylvanus, who protected

Policy of the court, in making two great

protected Gaul againſt the barbarians; and theſe the courtiers conſpired to ruin. The latter, accuſed by the blackeſt calumny, expoſed to a thouſand inſults, dreading every thing from an ungrateful and perfidious court, determined to revolt, and cauſed himſelf to be proclaimed emperour. generals ruin each other.

Urſicinus, who had been before diſgraced, was then pitched upon as the only perſon capable of putting a ſtop to the rebellion. Even his enemies favoured his appointment to the command, in hopes that the two generals would deſtroy each other. But though the court employed Urſicinus, it was only as an inſtrument of treachery. They pretended ignorance of the ſtep taken by Sylvanus, and wrote to him a letter of thanks for his behaviour in his government.

The other general went to meet him at Cologne, and, finding that his party could not be ruined by open force, made uſe of artifice, gained his confidence by affecting to ſympathize with his diſcontent and enter into his projects, corrupted his troops, cauſed him to be ſlain, and lamented his death, as was done by the whole empire.

When the court employed Urſicinus to execute this odious commiſſion, their intention was not to reſtore him to his power, even in caſe he ſucceeded. He remained in Gaul with the title of general, but without an army. The troops of Sylvanus had immediately diſperſed; and the emperour choſe rather to loſe that province than ſend ſupplies to the great general whoſe merit gave him umbrage. Thus was it totally abandoned as a prey to the barbarians. The Francs, the Alemains and the Saxons ravaged the country, after deſtroying forty five towns on the banks of the Rhine. Pannonia and Upper Mæſia were laid waſte by the Quadi and Sarmatians. The miſeries of the Eaſt were increaſed by the dreadful incurſions of the Perſians; while Conſtantius, inattentive to every thing but the quarrels of theologiſts, ſpent his time in aſſembling councils, perſecuting the defenders of conſubſtantiality, provoking the zeal of the Catholic biſhops, and inflaming The provinces left a prey to the barbarians.

Conſtantius entirely employed in theological matters.

ing the audacity of the Arians; and thus fomented diſcord and confuſion in the heart of his dominions, while the frontiers were laid waſte with fire and ſword. Such was the philoſopher of Themiſtius.

CHAP. II.

From the Promotion of Julian till his Revolt.

The emperour makes Julian Cæſar.

CONSTANTIUS, being ſurrounded by ſo many dangers, ſuffered himſelf, notwithſtanding his jealous diſtruſt, to be prevailed upon by the empreſs Euſebia to beſtow the dignity of Cæſar upon the celebrated Julian, with whoſe character it is now proper to acquaint the reader. This prince, who was brother to Gallus, and couſin german of the emperour, had been favoured by nature with the happieſt diſpoſitions, and formed by misfortune and ſtudy, whoſe leſſons ordinarily far ſurpaſs thoſe taught in the boſom of grandeur and the lap of pleaſure. They had endowed him with a greatneſs of ſoul ſuperiour to the nobility of his birth, by inſpiring him with a love of virtue, a deſire of inſtruction, a contempt of pleaſures, and a hatred for every thing degrading to human nature. Upon his quitting the caſtle of Macellum, in Cappadocia, where he and his brother had been confined ſix years, he obtained leave to complete his ſtudies, firſt at Conſtantinople, and afterwards at Athens. There he diſtinguiſhed himſelf only by his modeſty and an intenſe and ſucceſsful application to his ſtudies. Happy if he had made the true religion the baſis of his conduct! But conceiving a diſlike to Chriſtianity, becauſe his firſt preceptors had tired him with exerciſes of devotion, or the obſtinate diſputes between its different ſects had given him a diſtaſte to the whole, he addicted himſelf entirely to Maximus of Epheſus, and ſome other Platonic philoſophers. He ſoon became infatuated with their abſurd and myſterious theurgy, which they ſhrouded under the veil of

How the latter had paſſed his youth.

Seduced by the Platoniſts.

ſublime

ſublime piety, and in their ſchool was filled with ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm. But, though ſeduced by frivolous illuſions, he at leaſt attached himſelf to ſomething real by his ſtrict obſervance of moral duties. May we not give to Chriſtianity the honour of thoſe examples of virtue which make his memory reſpectable? A Chriſtian education had unqueſtionably foſtered the ſeeds of it in his heart.

He diſguiſed his inclination for idolatry.

Gallus, while he was Cæſar, taking alarm at the inclination which his brother even then ſhewed for idolatry, ſent him Aetius, the apoſtle of Arianiſm, in quality of ſuperintendent, and as an eſtimable guide. Julian, by an affectation of zeal for that ſect, removed all ſuſpicion; and, according to ſome eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians, in order the better to diſguiſe his real ſentiments, and eſcape the diſtruſtful jealouſy of Conſtantine, put on the monkiſh habit, and performed the office of deacon. After the death of Gallus he paſſed ſeven months in a kind of impriſonment; and had it not been for the protection of Euſebia, who entertained an eſteem for him, he would have undergone the ſame fate with his brother.

355. Conſtantius gives him no authority.

The emperour named him Cæſar at the age of twenty three, and gave him his ſiſter Helena in marriage; but, far from admitting him to ſhare his confidence, put him, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, into trammels. His domeſtics were removed, and their places filled with ſpies; his friends durſt not come near him; and though he had the title of Cæſar, he had no power.

Sends him into Gaul.

Being made governour of Gaul, a council was appointed for him, or rather ſo many maſters to direct his whole conduct; he had few troops, little money, and nothing in his own diſpoſal. With whatever faults this prince may be reproached, it is impoſſible not to admire his greatneſs of ſoul, and the fertility of his genius, when we ſee him ſurmounting ſo many obſtacles in the career of glory.

Julian's conduct in that province.

He had paſſed his life in the ſchools, where he had even contracted the ruſt of pedantry; was neither acquainted

quainted with the arts of war nor government; wanted experience, and was deſtitute of authority; yet, in the very beginning of his adminiſtration, he ſhewed himſelf a man of ſuperiour abilities. During his ſtay at Vienna, where he reſided the firſt winter, he applied himſelf to the ſtudy of the affairs of the province, and the art of war. He ſet his troops an example of attention to diſcipline and patience of fatigue; his diet was the ſame as that of the common ſoldiers, he expoſed himſelf to all the inclemencies of the winter, ſlept upon a hide, and roſe at midnight, allowed himſelf no relaxation from buſineſs, and ſtudy formed his ſole amuſement. By theſe methods he gained the admiration and affections of the ſoldiery; the Gauls reſpected and loved him for his equitable adminiſtration of juſtice; his ſuperintendents ſunk into inſignificance, for he did every thing without their help, and all his meaſures were crowned with ſucceſs. Two panegyrics on Conſtantius, written by him about that time, are proofs of his political addreſs. He likewiſe concealed his religious ſentiments with ſo great dexterity, that St. Hilary of Poitiers was deceived by appearances, and praiſes him as a pious prince in the ſame work where his brother is deſcribed as an enemy to the church.

Makes himſelf loved and reſpected.

Julian's exploits perfectly correſponded with the idea entertained of his merit. Every one of his campaigns was attended with victory. In a word, by an equal exertion of ſkill and courage, he freed Gaul from the Alemains, who had ſpread themſelves through the whole country, and even beſieged him in Sens; and, after cutting their army to pieces near Straſbourg, carried the terrour of his arms on the other ſide of the Rhine. One thing more amazing is, that the courtiers ridiculed his victories, while Conſtantius ſtupidly arrogated the honour of them to himſelf. In ſuch a court, all deciſions muſt have been unjuſt or capricious.

Drives out the barbarians.

Conſtantius, who had choſen Milan for his ordinary reſidence, made a progreſs to Rome, in order to celebrate

Conſtantius goes to Rome for the firſt time.

brate his triumph over Magnentius: an odious ceremony, as civil wars afford no proper ſubject for it.

Having never before ſeen that capital, its edifices filled him with admiration; and that he might leave a monument of his viſit, he tranſported from Egypt the obeliſk of Rameſes, which was one hundred and thirty two feet high, and had been deſtined by Conſtantine for an ornament to Conſtantinople. It was erected by Sextus Quintus, and is the largeſt in Rome.

Though a perſecutor he grants a toleration in Rome.

Though the emperour before his entry ordered the removal of the celebrated altar dedicated to Victory, which had been erected anew by Magnentius in the ſenate houſe, he viſited the temples of the gods, praiſed their founders, appointed Pagan prieſts, and confirmed the privileges of the veſtals. Yet he had forbidden the offering of ſacrifices under pain of death, at leaſt if we may give credit to a law inſerted in the Theodoſian code, which probably was never promulgated. *(V. Memoires de l' Acad. des Inſcript.* t. 15.) In religious affairs his conduct was always inconſiſtent. Though he tolerated Paganiſm at Rome, he perſiſted in diſturbing the empire by his zeal for Arianiſm, the different ſects of which he alternately protected and perſecuted, regulating his conduct according to the will of his eunuchs and courtiers, by whoſe intrigues all affairs were determined.

359. Sapor forms dangerous enterpriſes; and the court forms a deſign to ruin Urſicinus, who was powerful enough to thwart its deſigns.

Propoſals of peace had been offered to Sapor, which that implacable enemy of the Romans rejected as incompatible with his pretenſions; and, being inſtigated by a man of great fortune, a native of Meſopotamia, who had been obliged by oppreſſive treatment to leave the empire, he reſolved not to content himſelf as formerly with ſudden incurſions, which were attended with no durable advantage, but to puſh the war with vigour. Urſicinus then commanded in the Eaſt; and the eunuchs adviſed, or rather ordered him to be recalled at the conjuncture when his ſervices were moſt wanted. The whole country was filled with murmurs for the loſs of its defender; it is true he was ſent back, but without authority, and only that he might bear the blame of the

miſcarriages of Sabinian, a weak general, utterly unqualified for the command. This wretched court rejoiced at the calamities of the public, provided they could be made ſubſervient to the ruin of men of exalted merit, who were the objects of its jealouſy and hatred.

Conſtantius aſſembles councils, while Meſopotamia is invaded by the Perſians.

Amida, in Meſopotamia, was taken by Sapor after a long ſiege which coſt him thirty thouſand men, while the attention of Conſtantius was turned on aſſembling the councils of Rimini and Seleucia, in order to ſettle the theological controverſies, which grew fiercer in proportion to the multiplication of deciſions and formularies of faith; but of theſe we ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak again at the end of this reign.

Julian, on the contrary, ſtudies the happineſs of Gaul.

Julian's conduct in Gaul formed a ſingular contraſt to that of the emperour. He devoted the intervals of leiſure from the war to the adminiſtration of juſtice and relief of the people. Florentius, his *præfectus prætorii*, endeavouring to increaſe the taxes under pretence of the exigencies of the war, Julian himſelf demonſtrated by calculation, that they were more than ſufficient to defray all expenſes. He reduced the poll tax from twenty five pieces of gold, each worth about ſixteen ſhillings of our money, to ſeven. His ſeverity againſt thoſe who were guilty of extortion in collecting the public money, did not prevent him from guarding againſt the malice of accuſers. Numerius, being brought to trial for this crime, denied the whole charge; and there being no proof, the accuſer exclaimed—*Who will ever be found guilty, if a denial of the fact be ſufficient for his acquittal?* Julian retorted, *Who will ever be acquitted, if bare accuſation be ſufficient ground to find him guilty?*

CHAP. III.

End of the Reign of Conſtantius.

360. The emperour orders Julian

FLORENTIUS, and other enemies of juſtice, failed not to blacken Julian at the court, to render him an object of ſuſpicion, and taint all his actions with the

the poiſon of calumny. The emperour now beheld him only in the light of a rival, and with a view to diſarm him ordered the flower of his troops to Conſtantinople, from whence they were to march againſt the Perſians. Thus, after four glorious campaigns, Julian found himſelf at the eve of loſing the whole fruit of his labours. He ſaw that fine province which he had ſaved and reſtored to a flouriſhing condition, on the point of falling a prey to thoſe barbarians whom he had vanquiſhed.

lian to ſend his troops into the Eaſt.

However, he obeyed, publiſhed the emperour's orders, and urged their execution. But the Gallic troops, unable to bear the thoughts of quitting their country and their families to carry on a war in Aſia, took quite contrary meaſures, proclaimed him emperour at Paris, and liſtening neither to his remonſtrances nor entreaties, by dint of importunity and threats, at laſt obliged him to accept the diadem. Several writers charge him with having ſecretly directed the conſpiracy; but of this they give no evidence. Perhaps he ſhewed more reluctance than he really felt; but as his moſt inveterate enemies have not been able to convict him, he muſt be acquitted by hiſtory. Let us take a particular view of his conduct in a conjuncture ſo critical.

He obeys, but is forced by the Gauls to accept the diadem.

His firſt ſtep was granting pardon to a ſet of traitors who had conſpired againſt his life. He then declared to his ſoldiers that promotion to military or civil offices ſhould be the ſole reward of ſervices, and that whoever ſolicited him for any other muſt expect a refuſal. He wrote a letter to Conſtantius, in which he gave an account of the violence put upon him, and explained the motives of his compliance; promiſing ſtill to retain for him the dutiful reſpect of a ſubject, repreſenting, beſides, that the Gallic troops would never conſent to march into Aſia, and the abſolute neceſſity of ſharing the imperial dignity; and concluded with obſerving that a quarrel between the princes would be productive of the greateſt calamities. Another letter, which ought not to have been made public, was filled with reproaches dictated by reſentment.

He acts with prudence.

The

Conſtantius refuſes all terms of accommodation.

The emperour, far from entering into a negociation, only diſpatched ſevere orders, which Julian communicating to the troops, they interrupted him with the cry of *Julian emperour; the province, the army, the empire, require it.* After this he heſitated no longer in ſupporting a meaſure on which he ſaw depended his own life and that of his friends. If revolting againſt a ſovereign were in any caſe juſtifiable, this certainly might be excuſed, conſidering its motives and circumſtances.

361. Julian marches againſt him.

Julian, having nothing to hope and every thing to fear from Conſtantius, reſolved to be beforehand with him. He took his meaſures with prudence, provided for the ſecurity of Gaul, and exacted an oath of fidelity from his troops. His ſoldiers ſwore to follow wherever he led them, though thoſe very men had refuſed to quit their own country in compliance with the emperour's orders, ſo different ſentiments did they entertain of thoſe two princes! He marched on foot with his troops, bare headed, and ſhared in all the fatigues of the common ſoldiers. He ſurpriſed Sirmium before the inhabitants even had intelligence of his march, and ſeized upon the paſs of Succa, between mount Hæmus and Rhodopé at the entrance of Thrace. Italy and Greece eagerly eſpouſed his party; but two Pannonian legions, which, from a ſuſpicion of their fidelity, he had ordered into Gaul, having revolted on their march and ſeized upon Aquileia, he ſtopped to retake that place. This ſiege would neceſſarily take up a long time, and the news from the Eaſt made him very uneaſy; but an unforeſeen event at once put him in poſſeſſion of the empire, without expoſing him to the misfortune of ſhedding Roman blood.

His ſucceſſes.

Death of Conſtantius.

Sapor having made himſelf maſter of Singara and Bezabda, two important cities of Meſopotamia, Conſtantius made an unſucceſsful attempt to retake the latter. The Catholics, Arians and Idolaters joined in attributing the diſgraceful event of this enterpriſe to his perſecution of their reſpective religions, a remarkable proof of the temerity with which men interpret the judgments

judgments of Heaven. He was preparing to renew the war againſt the Perſians, when he received the news of Julian's rapid march; and Sapor having retired, he ſet out from Antioch to oppoſe the rebel, but could proceed no farther than Cilicia, where he was ſeized with a burning fever, which put an end to his life in the forty fourth year of his age, after he had, like his father, been baptized when in the agonies of death.

He did little good and a great deal of harm.

Though he enacted a few good laws, made ſome ſucceſsful expeditions, gave ſome inſtances of clemency, and ſhewed ſome ſigns of virtue, his memory is not the leſs odious nor contemptible, for the miſchief he did far outweighed the good. To mention no other, the religious quarrels which he inflamed, while he flattered himſelf with the thoughts of appeaſing them, became an incurable wound in the church and the empire. Ammianus, who without fanaticiſm was attached to the ancient worſhip of Rome, thus expreſſes himſelf on that ſubject: "By a womaniſh ſuperſtition he diſturbed "Chriſtianity, plain and ſimple as the nature of that "religion is; and, applying himſelf rather curiouſly to "fathom its depths, than to regulate its practice in a "manner becoming his dignity, he excited great diviſions, and fomented them by diſputes about words; "he exhauſted the funds deſtined for defraying the traveling expenſes of men employed in the buſineſs of "the ſtate, by keeping the biſhops in perpetual motion "for the holding of councils, in which he was ambitious "of preſcribing the mode of worſhip and the rules of "belief."

He diſturbed the empire by theological diſputes.

The teſtimony of this hiſtorian ought to have the more weight, as his impartiality has raiſed doubts with regard to his religion: ſome people are even of opinion that he was ſecretly attached to Chriſtianity.

Without entering into the particulars of eccleſiaſtical quarrels, which were inceſſantly envenomed by the diſcord of the biſhops, or the imprudence and cabals of the court, it will be ſufficient to make one important remark. The Arians took refuge in deceitful ſubtilties; in

Sentiments and complaints of the Arians.

in appearance they confeſſed the divinity of the Word, they ſaid he was like the Father (ὁμοιουσιος) but they obſtinately rejected the word conſubſtantial (ὁμουσιος) complaining that the Chriſtian world was ſet in a flame for a ſyllable, for a word not to be found in ſcripture, as if that word had not expreſſed the thing itſelf, and been rendered ſacred by the judgment of the church.

Councils of Rimini and Conſtantinople, where they ſeem to triumph.

The council of Rimini, in 359, compoſed of four hundred biſhops, more than three fourths of whom were Catholics, after having at firſt refuſed to make any alteration in the Nicene creed, being at laſt intimidated by the mandates of the court, admitted a formulary, bearing that the Son *is in every thing like the Father.* This example was followed by that of Seleucia, which was afterwards transferred to Conſtantinople. "The "ſubſcriptions that were every where exacted," ſays Fleury, "raiſed great diſturbances in the church. It "was a kind of perſecution more dangerous than that "of the Pagans, becauſe it ſprung up in her boſom. "Almoſt all ſubſcribed to the errour, even though they "diſbelieved it: only a very ſmall number were ex"empted, either becauſe they had reſolution enough to "refuſe compliance, or were too obſcure to attract no"tice. All the reſt yielded to the torrent, ſome "ſooner, ſome later, through motives of fear, ſelf intereſt, "or ignorance. The pretence of maintaining peace and "ſubmiſſion to the will of the emperour induced almoſt "all the prelates to join the Arian communion." *(Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. L. 14.)* But the reſolution of the Hilarys, Athanaſiuſes, &c. was not to be overcome; and the Nicene faith, after ſo many ſtorms, at laſt prevailed.

Overweening zeal of ſome holy biſhops.

It is to be wiſhed that the ardency of their zeal had not ſometimes prompted them to a conduct deſtructive of the faith, and inconſiſtent with the reſpect due to the ſovereign. Some holy prelates wrote ſevere invectives againſt Conſtantius, which they addreſſed to himſelf; and theſe were commended and imitated by others. *(V. Fleury & l' Hiſt. de l' Egliſe Gallic.)* A firſt example, as is commonly the caſe, produced others of a more dangerous

dangerous nature; in their eyes a prince who favoured hereſy was no longer clothed with the imperial majeſty; though formerly it had been acknowledged even in the tyrants who perſecuted Chriſtianity.

Why leſs ſubmiſſion was paid to the prince than formerly.

This diverſity of conduct proceeded from the difference of ſituation. The biſhops had moſt of them been loaded with riches and honours by Conſtantine; and, being provoked by the mortifications and uneaſineſs given them by his ſon, whoſe character was far from enſuring him reſpect, and inflamed by the diſputes on religion, which were carried on with exceſſive acrimony, they naturally tranſgreſſed the bounds of their primitive modeſty. The moſt virtuous ſuffered themſelves to be hurried away by zeal; the others were elated with their influence over the minds of the people; ſome, courtly and fawning, gave themſelves up to intrigue and the purſuits of ambition, while others thought they honoured God by defying their ſovereigns.

Audacious behaviour of Leontius of Tripoli.

Leontius of Tripoli was audacious enough to refuſe paying a reſpectful viſit to the empreſs Euſebia; he preſcribed the ceremonial which he expected ſhould be uſed on that occaſion. *When I enter, ſhe ſhall immediately riſe and advance to meet me; ſhe ſhall bow low to receive my bleſſing. When I am ſeated, ſhe ſhall modeſtly continue ſtanding till I give her a ſign to ſit down.* The empreſs demanded ſatisfaction for this inſult; but the emperour, dreading that he too ſhould be expoſed to ſome affront, commended the conduct of the biſhop.

The emperour the cauſe of the miſchief.

The greateſt part of the miſchiefs which infeſted the church, and neceſſarily reverted upon ſociety, were occaſioned by the weakneſs and imprudence of this prince. Under a wiſe emperour the diſputes would have been leſs violent, or at leaſt the ſupreme authority would not have been brought into contempt.

JULIAN.

CHAP. I.

Government of Julian.—His Endeavours to deſtroy Chriſtianity.

361. Julian acknowledged emperour with great demonſtrations of joy.

THE moment that the death of Conſtantius was made public, all hearts were turned to Julian. The fame of his exploits and virtues attracted the veneration of the public. The event which gave him peaceable poſſeſſion of the throne was even looked upon as ſupernatural, and he was received at Conſtantinople with equal joy and reſpect. He celebrated the funeral of the deceaſed emperour with magnificence, and affected to lament his death, though it is impoſſible his regret ſhould have been ſincere. One of his firſt cares was to erect a chamber of juſtice for the puniſhment of thoſe who ſhould be convicted of having abuſed their credit under the laſt reign. Three celebrated informers, Paul, Apodemus, and the eunuch Euſebius, who was great chamberlain, were condemned to the flames, and this act of ſeverity met with univerſal applauſe. But the public cenſured ſome arbitrary ſentences, which, as almoſt conſtantly happens on ſuch occaſions, fell upon innocent perſons.

He puniſhes informers.

Reforms the houſehold.

Numberleſs abuſes called aloud for reformation, eſpecially in the emperour's houſehold, where a multitude of uſeleſs officers preyed upon the ſubſtance of the ſtate: there were a thouſand barbers, a thouſand cooks, and the reſt in proportion, all inſatiable and unprincipled men, who ſpared nothing to gratify their luxury and rapacity. The public treaſure was ſwallowed up in this bottomleſs gulf, nor was it long before Julian perceived it. Having ſent for a barber, and ſeeing a man enter magnificently dreſſed—*I wanted a barber*, ſaid he, *not a ſenator*. This man, beſides a conſiderable ſalary and large gratifications, had twenty ſervants and as many horſes kept for him at the emperour's expenſe. All

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the barbers were discharged except one, and *even he*, said the prince, *is superfluous to a man who wears his beard*. He did the same by the eunuchs, and all the officers whom he thought unnecessary.

He applies himself to promote the public good.

Perhaps this reformation was principally directed by an extravagance of philosophy. But the people ought to think themselves happy in having such a philosopher for their sovereign, rather than a master who would lavish their money in vain parade. He protected them against the oppression of the financiers and the licentiousness of the soldiery, and administered justice with equal care and dispatch: this he thought an indispensible duty, and in every determination aimed only at the good of the subjects.

Flattery rejected.

He was a great enemy to flattery, and being one day highly applauded by the lawyers for his sentence in a certain cause—*I should be proud of those encomiums*, said he, *if I thought they who bestowed them would have been bold enough to censure me had I given a contrary decision*.

Maxim of government.

It was one of his principal maxims of government, *that the ancient laws and customs ought to be rigidly observed, unless some great public benefit obliges to a deviation*. A maxim which, though generally true, he falsely applied to Christianity.

Extravagant modesty of Julian with regard to the consuls.

Among striking marks of wisdom, we see in this prince an affectation of modesty, sometimes unbecoming his rank; in general, he carried things, in themselves laudable, to a faulty excess. It was customary for the emperour to attend the new consuls to the senate; and Mamertinus and Nevitus, who had been graced with that title, coming to the palace on the day appointed for the ceremonial, Julian went to meet them, received them in their litter, asked their orders for setting out, placed them with his own hands in the curule chair, and walked before them in the middle of the crowd. His panegyric, pronounced by Mamertinus, is still extant; it is an ingenious piece of flattery, but such as ought not to have been pleasing to philosophic ears. However, custom had made those addresses of adulation too frequent; and even Trajan had listened to his own praises from the mouth of Pliny.

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Exceſſive honours paid to the philoſopher Maximus.

One day when the emperour was haranguing the ſenate, he was informed of the arrival of the philoſopher Maximus from Ionia; upon which he roſe abruptly, embraced him, and, having uſhered him into the houſe, loaded him with praiſes, paid him all the honours due from a pupil to an old maſter, whoſe leſſons deſerved the moſt lively acknowledgments; and, after the ſenate was diſmiſſed, walked out with him hand in hand.

His palace filled with ſophiſts.

The invitations of the prince crowded the palace with a multitude of Sophiſts, men entirely unworthy of his confidence; and the philoſophic garb became a cloak for ambition and ſelf intereſt. True philoſophers are always rare, even when they are reſpected.

He purpoſes to aboliſh Chriſtianity, but without openly perſecuting it.

Julian had long hated Chriſtianity, which he abjured the moment that he was inveſted with the ſovereignty. His chief aim was to deſtroy that ſublime religion, becauſe he regarded it as deſtructive of the public weal; doubtleſs confounding the religion itſelf with the abuſes which had crept into it from the paſſions and prejudices of men. He was inſtigated to this attempt by his philoſophers, who, for the moſt part, adviſed violent meaſures; but theſe were equally repugnant to his principles and diſpoſition. He had too much humanity to expoſe himſelf to the reproach of tyranny, and too much good ſenſe not to ſee the inutility and hazard of a ſanguinary perſecution; he therefore formed his plan with the moſt profound policy, and without openly perſecuting the worſhippers of Jeſus Chriſt, did more miſchief to his religion than all thoſe who had let looſe their rage againſt it.

Thoughts of Libanius on that ſubject.

"He knew," ſays Libanius (Or. 13.) "that all at-
"tempts to force conſciences are fruitleſs; that bodily
"diſtempers may ſometimes be cured by tying down
"the patients, but neither ſword nor fire can deſtroy
"belief. If the hand offers ſacrifice, the heart diſowns
"it, charges the body with weakneſs, and perſiſts in its
"ſentiments. Men do not change their opinions, but
"only pretend to change them. Theſe hypocrites af-
"terwards aſk forgiveneſs of the party they have ſeemed

to

"to abandon; and they who have periſhed under pu-
"niſhment receive divine honours." If we may judge from this paſſage, Libanius deſerved the emperour's eſteem; and that prince actually made uſe of his counſels and his pen.

Julian a zealous obſerver of the Pagan rites.

Let us take a particular view of Julian's conduct in an affair of ſuch delicacy. In quality of high prieſt, he ſet the example of the religion he propoſed to re-eſtabliſh, zealouſly performed the functions of his office in preſiding at the Pagan ceremonies, ſhewed the moſt profound reverence for the gods, and thus inſpired ſuperſtitious minds with the ſame ſentiments of devotion, while others made it a duty apparently to imitate him.

He joins to them the precepts of morality.

A religion without morality, when cloſely examined, appears contemptible. This eſſential defect gave the Chriſtians a very great advantage over the Pagans, whom they reproached with being obliged to borrow from philoſophy the idea and knowledge of thoſe duties which it is the buſineſs of religion to inculcate and preſcribe. Julian was compelled to own the excellency of the Chriſtian religion in this reſpect, and uſed his utmoſt endeavours to introduce morality into Paganiſm. He ordered its precepts to be joined to the ceremonial of worſhip, and publicly taught; above all, zealouſly enforcing the practice of that charity by which Chriſtians are diſtinguiſhed.

He preſcribes rules of virtue to the prieſts

As the example of the prieſts has ſtill greater influence over the people than their diſcourſes, he exhorted them in his writings to obſerve a conduct worthy of their office, and draws up a plan for that purpoſe, in which he goes ſo far as to forbid them to read certain books, which, ſays he, *gradually kindle the flame of the paſſions*. He requires of them the love of the gods and of mankind, as the principal duties of their profeſſion; he commands them to be reſpected, but at the ſame time to make themſelves reſpectable. He deſcribes the dignity of their miniſtry, by calling them *the interpreters of the will of the gods to men, and the guarantees of the conduct of men towards the gods*. According to him,

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they never ought to visit the great, or men in authority, except to plead the cause of the poor, the widow and the orphan.

He turns the Christians into ridicule.

While he thus endeavoured to bring idolatry again into credit, he took every means tacitly to undermine Christianity. Fully persuaded that ridicule and contempt are more effectual means for accomplishing this purpose than the inflicting of tortures, he forbid the Galileans (by which name he called the disciples of Jesus Christ) to be ill treated on account of their religion, because, said he, *they are rather objects of compassion than hatred; they wander in the dark on the most essential points, and abandon the worship of the gods to adore the remains of carcases, and the bones of dead men.*

He foments their divisions.

He recalled to Constantinople all those who had been banished by Constantius, whether Catholics or Arians; and restored the churches to the bishops, with a view to rekindle among them those fatal dissensions which had been productive of so many mischiefs; *for he knew*, saith Ammianus Marcellinus, in hyperbolical and emphatic expression, *he knew that savage beasts shew less cruelty to mankind than Christians generally displayed in their disputes with one another.*

He opposes moderation to outrage.

He opposed an apparent moderation to the violence of false zeal, and thus turned its excesses to his advantage. Maris of Calcedon, an old man, of the Arian sect, who had lost his sight, having publicly insulted him at a sacrifice—*Be silent, thou miserable blind wretch*, said the emperour to him, *the Galilean, thy god, will not restore thee to thy sight*,—*I thank him*, replied the bishop, *for sparing me the pain of beholding an apostate like thee*; to which Julian made no reply, but continued the sacrifice.

He prohibits the Christians from teaching literature, and even attending the schools.

The Christians had some men of abilities, who, employing themselves as teachers of literature and the sciences, took that opportunity of insinuating the belief of their religion into the minds of their pupils, and decrying Paganism. They were formidable enemies to the philosophers, and defended the truth with the same

ſame arms with which theſe attacked it. In order to deprive them of this advantage, and render them contemptible by their ignorance, they were prohibited by the emperour from teaching grammar, rhetoric, and philoſophy; under this pretence, that as they did not believe the religious doctrine of the Greeks, they could not, without being guilty of a ſhameful impoſture, make uſe of the books which contained thoſe tenets. The ſame edict permitted the Chriſtians to attend the ſchools; but of this privilege they were afterwards deprived by a counter edict, becauſe *for them the goſpel ought to be ſufficient.* A prohibition, which Ammianus blames as a piece of cruelty; but, however, was well calculated for producing its effect. In the ſequel we ſhall have too frequent opportunities of ſeeing how prejudicial ignorance may be to religion; and Julian's policy ſuggeſted to him a method which could ſcarcely fail of anſwering his purpoſe.

He practiſes a thouſand methods to diſguſt or debaſe them.

Self intereſt being the great mover of the human heart, the emperour made that his principal engine againſt Chriſtianity. All favours and dignities were beſtowed excluſively upon idolaters; the faithful were abandoned to contempt and oppreſſion. He revoked the privileges of the clerks, aboliſhed the diſtributions eſtabliſhed by Conſtantine for their benefit, and that of widows and virgins, obliged the Chriſtians to rebuild the temples at their own expenſe, and excluded them from all employments, telling them, that by their law they were forbidden to uſe the ſword; the courts of juſtice were ſhut againſt them, becauſe the ſame law condemned ſuits and quarrels. If they complained of being taxed above their proportion by the governours, his anſwer was, *Doth not the goſpel teach you to deſpiſe the good things of this world, and to ſuffer wrong with patience?* He ſeized an opportunity of pillaging the opulent church of Edeſſa, in order *to facilitate to the Galileans the path to the kingdom of heaven.* He made difference in religion a ſufficient reaſon for divorce, which was an eaſy method for increaſing the number of apoſtates.

tates. In a word, he ſet in motion all the ſprings of refined policy againſt a ſet of men whom he wanted to ſeduce and pervert, but was unwilling to honour with martyrdom.

The indiſcreet zeal of ſome Chriſtians cauſes violent meaſures to be uſed.

The indiſcreet and raſh zeal of a number of Chriſtians, who overthrew the altars, ſtatues, and even temples, or by their tumults violated the public peace, occaſioned an effuſion of blood in the provinces. "In "ſeveral places," ſays the Abbé de la Bleterie, "eſpe- "cially in the Eaſt, where the paſſions are inflamed "by the climate, the Pagans, elated with their preſent "good fortune, inſulted the Chriſtians, who, leſs mind- "ful of the rules preſcribed by the goſpel than of their "paſt proſperity, returned injury for injury, and inſult "for inſult. From words they came to blows, and "from blows to ſedition." It is not to be wondered, therefore, if the governours of provinces, who were enemies to Chriſtianity, carried their ſeverity beyond the limits preſcribed to them. But, notwithſtanding the aſſertions of ſome reſpectable authors, it may be doubted whether in this point they conformed to the ſecret inclinations of the prince. The infliction of puniſhment, merely for the ſake of religion, was certainly contrary to his views, and the plan he had ſo artfully laid down.

Julian's ſuperſtition.

But no doubt can be entertained of his being led into the moſt abſurd practices by a blind ſuperſtition. He ſacrificed numberleſs victims, and if he had lived longer bid fair for deſtroying the breed of cattle. This is the expreſſion of Ammianus himſelf, who aſſures us, that the expenſe of celebrating the ſacrifices, and performing the ceremonies, became burdenſome to the ſtate; that the ſoldiers almoſt every day feaſted upon the fleſh of the oblations; that they drank to exceſs, eſpecially the Gauls, and were then guilty of every kind of licentiouſneſs. St. Chryſoſtom aſſerts, that during the religious ceremonies, the emperour was accompanied by crowds of debauchees; and St. Gregory of Nazianzum accuſes him of ſecret abominations, of nocturnal ſacrifices, where human blood was ſhed. But, as has been remarked

marked by the Abbé de la Bleterie, "We ought not "eaſily to credit diſcoveries publiſhed after the death of "Julian, when the hatred of the public had not yet "ſubſided; and ſometimes popular report furniſhes "tales ſo well contrived, as to deceive authors the leaſt "inclined to impoſe upon their readers." I ſhall add an obſervation ſtill more ſtriking. St. Gregory, while pouring out invectives againſt Julian, ſpeaks of Conſtantius not only as an excellent prince, but as a ſaint. If we conſider the circumſtances, this partiality is eaſily accounted for, eſpecially in a work of eloquence: it ought to be a leſſon to the reader to be cautious in forming a judgment. It argues great ignorance of human nature, to be ſurpriſed at ſeeing the moſt reſpectable men ſometimes giving way to prejudice: and he muſt be a foe to juſtice and humanity, who will not fairly weigh the reaſons that in ſuch caſes weaken their teſtimony.

The charges brought by ſome authors ſuſpicious.

CHAP. II.

Perſian War:—End of Julian's Reign.

DURING theſe attempts to deſtroy Chriſtianity, the emperour was laying the plan of a great enterpriſe againſt the Perſians. His intention was to revenge upon Sapor the injuries done to the Roman name; and by his economy, the wiſdom of his adminiſtration, and the terrour with which the barbarians had been ſtruck by the ſucceſs of his arms, he was enabled to carry the war into the heart of Aſia. He ſet out from Conſtantinople in the year 362. The weſtern provinces were ſcarcely ſenſible of his abſence, and remained in profound tranquillity till his death; his very name being ſufficient to curb thoſe fierce and rapacious nations, who inceſſantly threatened the empire. Sapor having ſent propoſals of peace, he threw down the letter with contempt, ſaying, that *he would ſoon give an anſwer*

362. War undertaken againſt the Perſians.

in perſon. He was a hero incapable of weakneſs; but what hero can reckon upon his fortune?

Public calamities.

The public calamities with which the empire was then afflicted were a kind of prelude to the ill ſucceſs of this expedition. Nicomedia, which a ſhort time before had ſuffered ſeverely by an earthquake, was entirely deſtroyed by a new ſhock; ſeveral other cities met with the ſame fate; and ſome were ſwallowed up by the ſea. An exceſſive drought was ſucceeded by a peſtilence and famine, which Julian endeavoured to remedy, by fixing corn at a low price; he cauſed conſiderable quantities of it to be imported; but the dealers abandoned a trade by which they could not make ſufficient profit; and ſome rich avaricious men privately purchaſed all the grain, in order to ſell it again at an exceſſive rate, which furniſhes a remarkable inſtance in favour of a free trade. Antioch, where the emperour then reſided, was filled with complaints and murmurs againſt his conduct.

Monopolies of corn.

Julian inſulted at Antioch.

The inhabitants of this city, who, except a very few, profeſſed the Chriſtian religion, though their manners were licentious and their diſpoſitions frivolous, judging of men by their appearance, fond of ſhew, magnificence and pleaſures, regardleſs of merit, or rather openly deſpiſing it, derided a prince who had turned his court into a ſchool of philoſophy, and the auſterity of whoſe manners they looked upon as a cenſure of their licentiouſneſs. Their malignant wit was excited by his air of ruſticity, his train of philoſophers, his ſuperſtitious devotion, and, above all, his long and ſhaggy beard; (for in this reſpect he imitated the practice of the philoſophers); they turned him into ridicule, and had the inſolence to inſult him with ſatirical libels.

He revenges himſelf by a ſatire entitled *Miſopogon*

He revenged himſelf only by writing a ſatire, which, though juſt, was unſuitable to his dignity. This work is ſtill extant, under the title of *Miſopogon*, or the hater of the beard: in it he affects to cenſure his own conduct, and reproach himſelf with a thouſand faults, in order to give a more lively picture of the diſorders which

prevailed

prevailed in Antioch. His performance was anſwered, and he made no reply; but when he quitted the place he declared that he would never again enter its walls. He appointed Alexander its governour, a man of inflexible and turbulent diſpoſition. *I know well*, ſaid the emperour, *that Alexander does not deſerve a government, but Antioch deſerves ſuch a governour.* This was an acknowledgment that his choice was directed by paſſion; it was a deviation from thoſe principles of wiſdom which did honour to his philoſophy.

He pardons ſome aſſaſſins, and ſets an example to the troops.

Several laudable actions afterwards done by him deſerve the higheſt encomiums. Ten Chriſtian ſoldiers having entered into a plot to aſſaſſinate him, he contented himſelf with diſmiſſing them, after a ſevere reprimand. Having found among his baggage a large ſtock of wines and other liquors, he ſaid—*A ſoldier ought only to drink the wine he gains by his ſword; I am a ſoldier, and do not deſire to be treated better than others*; and rejected with indignation thoſe ſuperfluities of luxury. In a ſpeech to his troops he declared, that in time of war he required a ready obedience, but when that was at an end *was far from being jealous of the privilege of princes who ſubſtitute their arbitrary pleaſure inſtead of reaſon and juſtice*; *that he would allow every perſon to demand of him an account of his conduct, and be ready to ſatisfy them.* Always ſetting an example of aſſiduity, patience, and valour, he infuſed a ſpirit of heroiſm into his ſoldiers, and ſhewed himſelf a ſkilful general in the management of them. Here it is that he appears really the great man.

He advances to the banks of the Tigris, and profits by his knowledge of hiſtory. 363.

After a dangerous march through Aſſyria, he advanced to the banks of the Tigris. On this ſide of the river ſtood the city of Coche, near the ruins of the famous Seleucia; on the other was Cteſiphon, the capital of the Perſian empire. If the Roman fleet ſailed from the Euphrates into the Tigris below Cteſiphon, it would be expoſed to inevitable deſtruction, and the army be entirely unprovided with neceſſaries for the ſiege. A knowledge of hiſtory was on that occaſion of no ſmall

ſervice to the emperour. He knew that a canal had formerly been drawn between thoſe rivers, which he diſcovered after a painful ſearch, though no traces of it at that time remained. It was then cleared, and the fleet ſailed through it.

He paſſes the river with great danger.

However, this did not facilitate his paſſage over the Tigris. The banks were ſteep, and lined with troops and armed elephants, the ſight of which ſtruck a panic into the ſoldiers. In order to diſſipate their fears, Julian celebrated military games at the ſame time that he was making preparations, and ordering the embarkation, which was performed under favour of the night. The Perſians ſet fire to the firſt veſſels that croſſed. *Courage*, cried the emperour; *we are maſters of the bank*; *that flame is the ſignal I ordered to be given.* The army believed him, reſumed courage, paſſed the river in confidence of victory, which they gained after an obſtinate engagement, pillaged the enemies' camp, and more than ever admired the genius of their leader.

He abandons the deſign of laying ſiege to Cteſiphon

Cteſiphon had always been regarded as fatal to the Roman power, and the moſt experienced officers were againſt laying ſiege to it, becauſe Sapor was advancing with his main army. Beſides, Arbaces king of Armenia, and two generals who were expected with a reinforcement, had not yet come up. Julian, having no hopes of being able to take the city without their aſſiſtance, reſolved to go and meet them, and accordingly marched up the Tigris. But being miſled by the treacherous advice of a deſerter, he burned his fleet, and entangled himſelf in the interiour parts of the country, where he ſoon met with deſert plains, in which he was obliged at once to combat againſt famine and the Perſians.

Sapor attacks him in his retreat.

In this dreadful ſituation he deliberated on a retreat, and determined to advance towards Corduene, a province on the ſouth of Armenia; but Sapor, at the head of the Perſians, haraſſed his march, which was one continued ſucceſſion of ſkirmiſhes. The Romans were almoſt conſtantly victorious, but already felt the horrours of famine;

famine; and a ſtorm intervening, the Perſians, although diſcouraged, ſeized that opportunity of making a laſt effort. Julian, though he had not time to put on his armour, fought with his uſual barvery, and flew to every quarter where the danger was moſt preſſing; being wounded with a javelin in the liver, he fell, but ſoon after mounted on horſeback; however, growing faint with the loſs of blood, he cauſed himſelf to be carried to his tent, crying out, that his wound was not mortal; and the moment it was dreſſed was eager to return to the field; but his ſtrength failed, and he perceived his end approaching.

Battle in which he is wounded.

The death of this hero was as ſurpriſing as his life. In a long diſcourſe addreſſed to his friends, he expreſſed his joy at finding his ſoul ready to be diſengaged from the ties of the body; thanked God for not having ſuffered him to periſh by a conſpiracy, a lingering diſeaſe, or the ſword of a tyrant. He aſſured them, that after having lived a guiltleſs life, in the exerciſe of his duty, a foe to deſpotiſm, and a zealous friend to the public good, he received a death ſo glorious as a favour from heaven; *for*, ſaid he, *it argues equal cowardice to wiſh for death before it comes, and to fear it when it is unavoidable.* He refuſed to name his ſucceſſor, but referred the choice to his friends; and added, that as a good citizen, he wiſhed to be ſucceeded by a man worthy of the ſovereignty; after which, he expired, at the age of thirty one.

His courageous death.

The popular tales concerning Julian's death, which have been propagated by a miſtaken zeal, deſerve no more credit than the infamous crimes and acts of cruelty with which it has been endeavoured to blacken his memory, though that be ſufficiently tarniſhed by his hatred againſt Chriſtianity.* Ammianus was an eye witneſs of the tranſactions, and his narration bears the ſtamp of truth. Though an admirer of Julian, he does not

Ammianus more credible than any other hiſtorian of this prince.

* Among many other abſurdities, the following is worth notice. The unknown author of the acts of St. Theodoret, who pretends to have followed the emperour, ſays, that the enemy's army conſiſted of angels in a human form.

not diſſemble his faults, his vanity, his ſuperſtition, and his propenſity to ſatire. He cenſures ſome parts of his conduct towards the Chriſtians, His impartiality has even miſled ſome modern *literati*, who, as has been already remarked, believed him a favourer of Chriſtianity. On the authority of this eſtimable hiſtorian we may therefore ſecurely reſt our judgment of a hero, who, notwithſtanding his foibles, would have excited univerſal admiration by the qualities of his head and heart, had not his apoſtacy rendered him an object of deteſtation to the Chriſtians of his own times. Had he protected the true religion, what praiſes would they not have beſtowed on him, when a holy biſhop, in order to depreciate his character, thought himſelf authorized to celebrate Conſtantius, who was a profeſſed Arian and a bad prince?

Julian's works.

As an author, Julian deſerves the preference to moſt of his cotemporaries. The moſt curious of his works are the *Satire of the Cæſars*, and the *Miſopogon*. He wrote another againſt Chriſtianity, of which only ſome fragments are extant, quoted in the refutation of it by St. Cyril of Alexandria. The later Platoniſts borrowed many of the Chriſtian doctrines, which they endeavoured to veil under the abſurd allegories of polytheiſm. Their gods were only genii, ſubordinate to the Supreme Being, which ſpecious doctrine probably deluded this uncommon genius, and rendered him the dupe of their abſurd ſuperſtitions.

By what means he was ſeduced by the Platoniſts.

His letter to Themiſtius is a ſtriking proof of his eſteem for philoſophy. *By forming three or four philoſophers*, ſays he, *you may do mankind more real ſervice than could be done by a number of emperours. The philoſopher plays an important part on the theatre of the world. You ſay that he is capable of giving advice which may be uſeful to the ſtate; he does more, he gives good examples. His diſcourſes are ſupported by his actions. As he is himſelf what he deſires other men ſhould be, his conduct is more perſuaſive and efficacious than the mandates of thoſe who can only command.* This eulogium could be juſtified only by

His eulogium of philoſophers.

by the practice of philoſophy. But in that age, where could a Socrates or a Phocion be found?

Libanius enjoyed the principal ſhare in Julian's friendſhip. That famous ſophiſt taught at Antioch when the emperour came to that city; however, he did not preſent himſelf at court. *I was his friend*, ſaid he, *not his flatterer*. Julian, piqued at his coldneſs, wrote to him a billet filled with raillery and reproach; to which he received an anſwer written on the ſame billet, and nearly in the ſame ſtyle. He invited the ſophiſt to dinner.—*I do not dine*, replied the latter.—*Then we will ſup together*.—*I have a headach, I cannot*.—*At leaſt come and ſee me often*.—*I will come when ſent for; I am afraid of being troubleſome*. This boldneſs was not diſpleaſing to the emperour, who continued his intimacy with Libanius during his whole life.

Boldneſs of Libanius the ſophiſt.

No fact is better known in ancient hiſtory than the unſucceſsful attempt made by this prince to rebuild the temple of Jeruſalem. Ammianus ſays, that he was prompted to this undertaking by a deſire of immortalizing his name by great works, and that the workmen were ſtopped by volumes of flame which burſt out of the earth at different times.

Project of rebuilding the temple of Jeruſalem.

The Chriſtian authors aſcribe this attempt to another motive, and ſay his deſign was to deprive Chriſtianity of the proof drawn from the diſperſion of the Jews and the deſtruction of their temple; they add a great number of miraculous circumſtances, a particular account of which may be ſeen in our eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians. We know not any miracle better atteſted, ſays the learned Fleury.

JOVIAN.

JULIAN's death was followed by a general conſternation. The victorious army was in want of every neceſſary, in the middle of the enemy's country, and the race of Conſtantius Chlorus was entirely extinct. Salluſt, prefect of the Eaſt, refuſed the empire, and adviſed

363. Jovian elected emperour.

viſed putting off the election till the army in Meſopotamia could concur in it. But a head was wanted, and the choice fell upon Jovian, captain of the guards called *Domeſtic*, who, though young, addicted to the pleaſures of the table, to wine, and women, ſhewed himſelf poſſeſſed of many excellent qualities, which might one day compenſate his faults.

Makes a diſhonourable peace with Sapor.

Sapor ſent him propoſals of peace, either becauſe he dreaded driving the Romans to deſpair, or deſigned, by amuſing them with the hopes of a treaty, to reduce them to the extremity of famine. Jovian immediately diſpatched deputies to the Perſian camp. Four days were paſſed in negotiations, during which the march of the army was diſcontinued; though, according to Ammianus, they might in that time have reached Corduene, where they would have enjoyed abundance and ſecurity. The famine was become inſupportable, when Sapor demanded the reſtitution of the five provinces on the Tigris, which had been ceded by his great grandfather, Narſes, to Galerius, and likewiſe inſiſted upon being put in poſſeſſion of Niſibis, Singara, and ſome other places in Meſopotamia. Theſe diſhonourable conditions were accepted, and the empire was for the firſt time diſmembered.

Firſt diſmemberment of the empire.

Retreat of the Romans.

Jovian repaſſed the Tigris, without having had the prudence to ſtipulate for a ſupply of proviſions from the Perſians. For ſix days his troops were obliged to feed upon the fleſh of their camels and other beaſts of burthen. The inhabitants of Niſibis, who had thrice baffled the attempts of Sapor, earneſtly entreated permiſſion to defend themſelves. But the emperour, faithful to his engagements, forced them to evacuate the place, and his diſgrace was increaſed by their deſpair. Julian would doubtleſs have preferred a glorious death to ſo ignominious a peace.

The emperour, though a Chriſtian, inſulted at Antioch.

We may form an idea of the general indignation, by the conduct of the people of Antioch. Though Jovian was a zealous Chriſtian, and the news of his predeceſſor's death had been received by the Chriſtians in that city

city with the moſt indecent joy, the people, far from receiving him with the uſual applauſes, loaded him with ſatire, and even would have broken out into a violent ſedition, had they not been ſomewhat calmed by the prefect Salluſtius.

He protects Chriſtianity without having recourſe to violence.

However, this prince's ſtay at Antioch was conſecrated to the public good; and he gave proofs of real wiſdom, by healing the wounds of the church, without diſturbing the ſtate, or offering violence to conſciences.

The Pagans were the more turbulent, as falſe zeal had immediately broken out, overthrown the altars, and inſulted and menaced the partiſans of idolatry. But Jovian was ſenſible that force in matters of religion is a ſpecies of tyranny equally abſurd and odious; which, inſtead of enlightening the mind, fills it with averſion, and produces hypocriſy, a greater evil than errour. He therefore left to every one the free exerciſe of his religion, reſtored the privileges of the churches and clerks, and revived the ancient diſtributions of corn, which, however, he reduced to one third during the dearth. He recalled St. Athanaſius from baniſhment, who had always been looked upon with deteſtation by the Arians as their moſt formidable enemy. In a council held at Antioch, where the Nicene faith was confirmed, the emperour declared his intention to moleſt no man for his belief, and to favour all attempts to reconcile the jarring ſpirits. The heretics caballed without ſurpriſing him, and the Catholics triumphed without perſecution. His conduct deſerves to be quoted as a model, for it met with univerſal applauſe.

He dies in Aſia.

The empire had the proſpect of a juſt and pacific reign; Jovian was impatiently expected at Conſtantinople and Rome, and he was eager to receive the homage of his ſubjects in thoſe two cities; for which purpoſe he ſet out from Antioch in the month of December. But his good fortune vaniſhed like a flaſh of lightning. While on his journey through Galatia, he was found dead in his bed, having, probably, been ſtrangled by the vapour of charcoal with which his chamber had been

This reign very advantageous to Chriſtianity.

been warmed. At his death he was only thirty three years of age. Although his reign was too ſhort, it may be looked upon as having been of great advantage to Chriſtianity. Had Julian's ſucceſſor, like him, profeſſed idolatry, and proſecuted his plan of policy for the deſtruction of the Chriſtian religion, two examples of this kind would, perhaps, have drawn on others; and a third Pagan emperour would probably have extended the miſchief wide. It is a miracle in the order of Providence, to ſee the moſt mortifying religion eſtabliſh itſelf in the midſt of obſtacles, notwithſtanding the faults and diſſenſions of its followers.

VALENTINIAN I. *in the Weſt*, *And* VALENS *in the Eaſt*.

364. Valentinian proclaimed by the army,

AFTER an interregnum of ſome days, the army then encamped at Nice in Bithynia, choſe for emperour Valentinian, who had ſtopped at Ancyra. His father, Gratian, was a native of Pannonia, of an obſcure family, who by his valour and uncommon ſtrength of body had raiſed himſelf from the rank of a common ſoldier to the dignity of count of Africa. The ſon, treading in his ſteps, had acquired reputation in the army; and though illiterate, exceſſively ſevere, and too avaricious, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by virtues worthy of the throne.

who deſire him to name a colleague.

As ſoon as he was inveſted with the enſigns of his dignity, the ſoldiers required him, with loud clamours, to name a colleague, that the empire might no more be expoſed to the misfortune of remaining without a head.

His reſolute anſwer.

Not in the leaſt intimidated by this ſedition, he thus addreſſed the troops: *It was in your power*, ſaid he to them, *to have made another emperour; but as I am by your choice raiſed to that dignity, it is now my province to command, and yours to obey. I do not refuſe to take a colleague, but I reſerve to myſelf the right of chooſing, at ſuch an opportunity as I ſhall think proper, a man worthy of you and*

of

of me. This discourse imposed silence on the mutineers; and a short time after Valentinian named his brother Valens Augustus, in which he certainly less regarded the public good than the interest of his family. One of his captains had frankly said to him, If you have a regard for your family, you have a brother; if you love the state, choose the most deserving: an advice by which he ought to have profited.

Chooses his brother Valens.

The barbarians having no longer a Julian to fear, had put themselves in motion, and renewed their incursions. The Alemains poured into Gaul and Rhætia (the counties of Tyrol, Trent, &c.) the Quadi and Sarmatians into Pannonia, the Picts and Scots into the Roman territories in Britain, the Goths into Thrace, a number of Mooriſh tribes into the provinces of Africa; and Sapor, thinking himself freed from all engagements by the death of Jovian, attempted the conquest of Armenia, which had formerly been a part of the Persian empire. In order to make head against so many enemies, the two emperours divided their dominions. Valens had the East, i. e. Egypt, Asia, and Thrace; Valentinian reserving the West to himself, not that he preferred Rome to Constantinople, as might be imagined, for after the time of Constantius the emperour had ordinarily resided at Milan, as being situated almost in the centre of his dominions.

Barbarians invade the empire on all sides.

Division of the empire.

During those times of confusion, one of the most essential measures was the recruiting of the public treasury, which had been exhausted by the Persian war, and the maintenance of internal tranquillity, which was incessantly disturbed by the differences of religion. For this purpose Valentinian made several political regulations. He declared that no person should be exempted from contributing towards the expenses of the war against the barbarians. That the officers of his household and the magistrates ought even to set an example of zeal as well as the clergy, whose peculiar profession it is to relieve the miserable. It is observed, that Constantius had exempted the clerks from this tax precisely for the same

Regulations of Valentinian for the re-establishment of the finances.

The clergy taxed.

ſame reaſon, ſaying, that their gain would turn to the profit of the poor. But what was the conſequence if ſelf intereſt was ſtronger than charity?

The free gifts of the cities changed into tribute.

The preſents made on ſome occaſions to the emperours by the cities had been conſiderably leſſened by Julian, who always looked upon them as free gifts; but Valentinian converted them into a fixed tribute, from which none were exempted except the ſenators. Perhaps neceſſity made him ſecure this fund of ſupply. One thing may be alledged in his favour, that he publiſhed ſevere laws againſt extortion, the oppreſſions of the collectors of the public revenue being often more burthenſome to the people than the taxes themſelves.

Toleration granted by Valentinian.

His conduct with regard to the object of next importance was regulated by the dictates of prudence. Though a Chriſtian, and determined Catholic, he tolerated Paganiſm, the proſcription of which would have occaſioned violent commotions. The prieſts were left in full poſſeſſion of their privileges; he even promiſed rewards to thoſe who filled their ſtation in an exemplary manner; he ſuffered the Romans to keep their altar dedicated to Victory, for which they ſhewed ſo great a predilection.

He diſmiſſes the philoſophers.

With regard to the philoſophers, whoſe number had prodigiouſly increaſed during the reign of Julian, he ordered thoſe whoſe lives were unſuitable to their profeſſion to return to their own country, becauſe *It is ſhameful* (theſe are his own expreſſions) *for men who boaſt of being proof againſt the attacks of misfortune, not to have ſufficient reſolution to ſhare with their countrymen the weight of the public offices.*

He honours and reſtrains the clergy.

He made it a point of duty not to intermeddle in theological diſputes, leaving to the biſhops all doctrinal matters, and concerning himſelf only with what affected the political order of ſociety. If he baniſhed St. Hilary of Poitiers from Milan, it was owing to the troubles excited by the zeal of that eccleſiaſtic againſt the biſhop of the city, who was accuſed of Arianiſm. Though the

He annuls the do-

emperour entertained the higheſt veneration for the epiſcopal character, he oppoſed a barrier to the avidity of the

the clergy, ſecular and regular, by prohibiting them from frequenting the houſes of widows and orphans, and confiſcating all donations, even legacies, made to them by women under a pretence of their being employed for pious uſes. After the example of Conſtantine, he enacted, that no man capable of bearing public offices ſhould be admitted into the body of the clergy. Had wiſe precautions been taken at the beginning, the diſagreeable neceſſity of paſſing ſuch laws would have been prevented.

nations made to the clergy ſecular & regular, by women.

Under ſuch a government, religious quarrels ſeemed extinct, and orthodoxy thereby gained great advantages. Valens, on the contrary, who was a violent Arian, and of a mercileſs diſpoſition, perſecuted the Catholics without being able firmly to eſtabliſh his own ſect.

The weſtern church enjoys tranquillity.

Both princes adopted a laudable meaſure in cauſing ſome of the principal inhabitants of every town to be choſen, under the title of *defenders*, for the protection of the weak, the preſervation of order and juſtice, the correction of abuſes and oppreſſion, not by a coercive power, which they had not in their hands, but by remonſtrances, judicial procedures, and appeals to ſuperiour tribunals. It unfortunately happens, that the more prevalent diſorders are in a ſtate, the leſs effectually can ſuch offices be exerciſed.

Officers under the title of *defenders* eſtabliſhed in the towns.

365. While Valentinian was employed in Gaul againſt the Alemains, who, not having received the uſual preſents, or rather tribute, had croſſed the Rhine, and were ravaging the country, Valens was on the point of being dethroned. Procopius, a relation of Julian, had diſappeared after the death of that prince, becauſe he was ſuſpected of aiming at the purple. In his retirement he was informed of the general diſaffection to Valens. That prince was already repreſented as a ſecond Tiberius, becauſe his father in law, Petronius, was another Sejanus. The tyranny of the ancient emperour ſeemed to be revived by an edict ſubjecting to capital puniſhment not only the authors of defamatory libels, but all in whoſe poſſeſſion they were found.

Tyranny of Valens.

Though

Procopius attempts to dethrone him, but miscarries and is put to death.

Though Procopius had neither the genius nor resolution requisite for the conduct of great enterprises, his first attempts were attended with success. Being proclaimed emperour by a few cohorts, he made himself master of Constantinople and Thrace without any difficulty, and even seized upon Cyzicus, the capital of the countries on the eastern coast of the Hellespont; but the following year, by the treachery of his generals, of whose services he shewed himself unworthy, he was defeated in Phrygia, and delivered up to the emperour, by whom he was immediately put to death.

Wars with the Alemains.

Valentinian was too much employed in the war with the Alemains to be able to lend his brother any assistance. Jovinus, an excellent general, who commanded in that war, attacked the barbarians when their army was divided, defeated them in three engagements, and secured the frontiers from their incursions. One of their kings being, contrary to the laws of humanity, hanged up by the soldiers, Jovinus resolved to punish their tribune for the murder, had not they protested that they alone were guilty of it.

The Romans barbarous and perfidious.

From this period we shall see the Roman name disgraced by a thousand atrocious actions. From their mixture with the barbarians they adopted the manners of those nations, to which they added their own vices, and were no longer startled at the commission of treachery, cruelty, and the blackest crimes. Dreading the enterprises of Vithicabus, another German king, and not being able to secure his person, they bribed one of his domestics to assassinate him. Had their ancestors pursued the same conduct, the name of Rome would scarce have been mentioned in history.

Valentinian too severe.

Valentinian has been reproached with committing several acts of excessive rigour bordering on tyranny. It was a maxim with him, that *severity is the soul of justice, and justice of sovereignty*. But he did not reflect that the man who is really just, is only rigid against crimes, and that excessive severity leads to injustice.

Prætex-

The celebrated Prætextatus, prefect of Rome, a zealous Pagan,

Pagan, was better acquainted with the rules that men in authority ought to prescribe to themselves. His incorruptible equity was always tempered with mildness, and his decisions were invariably respected as a source of the public good. He appeased the tumults excited by the schism of Ursinus, an affair which, considering the scandal it raised in the church, deserves a particular narration.

Prætextatus a wise prefect of Rome.

After the death of pope Liberius, famous for having subscribed the Arian confession, Damasus was canonically elected; but the desire of honours and riches stirred up a rival. If we may believe Ammianus, ambitious men looked with eager desire upon that eminent station, which was formerly the post of fatigue and danger. "They perceive," says he, "that it will give "them an opportunity of accumulating a fortune by "the liberalities of the women; that they can then ride "in chariots, appear in a magnificent dress, and keep a "better furnished table than sovereign princes; but it "were better for them did they imitate some of the bi-"shops in the provinces, who, by their frugality, sim-"plicity, and modesty, gain the love of the eternal "Creator, and the respect of his true worshippers."

366. The see of Rome already an object of ambition.

Ursinus, a deacon of the church of Rome, formed a design of depriving Damasus of the pontificate, secured a party, received ordination, and held out a siege against the pope's partisans. A cathedral, in which he intrenched himself, became a theatre of war, where one hundred and thirty lives were lost. The emperour sentenced him to banishment, and Prætextatus drove out the schismatics by force of arms; but the schism was not entirely healed till several years after. This may be looked upon as a prelude to those dreadful mischiefs which ambition engendered in the bosom of the church. They certainly had even then grown to a very considerable height, as the example of so many holy bishops was not sufficient to restrain them.

Ursinus disputes it with Damasus; scandalous schism.

While the West enjoyed the sweets of tranquillity under Valentinian, the East was distracted by the zeal of Valens

Origin & settlements of the Goths.

Valens for Arianiſm, at the ſame time that he drew upon the empire a number of enemies capable of overturning it, and whom we ſhall ſoon ſee eſtabliſhing their dominion in the Weſt. Theſe were the Goths, a people before this period renowned in hiſtory, and who deſerve our particular notice.

Scandinavia.

According to the opinion of the moſt judicious authors, the Goths originally inhabited the country of Scandinavia (at preſent Sweden and Norway) called by the ancients *the nurſery of nations*, one province of which ſtill retains the name of Gothland. Some centuries before the Chriſtian era they had emigrated in ſearch of a ſettlement elſewhere, when ſeveral of their tribes, the Rugii, the Vandals, the Lombards, the Heruli, fixed their reſidence in Germany. In the ſecond century, the bulk of the nation, having penetrated to the coaſts of the Palus Mæotis, eſtabliſhed themſelves in thoſe regions, whence they extended their conqueſts with great rapidity: under the reign of Valens they gained poſſeſſion of Dacia (at preſent Walachia, &c.) and were diſtinguiſhed by the names of Oſtrogoths and Viſigoths, the firſt inhabiting the coaſts of the Euxine, and towards the mouths of the Danube, the ſecond dwelling along the banks of that river.

Character of that people, their connexion with the empire.

Being men of a fine figure, a martial diſpoſition, ſound ſenſe, remarkable for their chaſtity and ſteadineſs, they were diſtinguiſhed from the herd of barbarians by their ſuperiour qualifications. Their princes bore only the title of judges, a name which they looked upon as more reſpectable than that of kings. Their laws were diſtinct, clear, and invariably obſerved. (They are extant in the code of Theodoric, and ſhall be noticed afterwards.) Claudius II. Aurelian, Tacitus, and Probus, had ſtopped the progreſs of this conquering nation. Galerius and Conſtantine had uſed them as auxiliaries, it being ſtipulated that they ſhould furniſh forty thouſand troops upon demand. After the death of Julian, who deſpiſed them, they again began to be formidable, and laid waſte the leſſer Scythia, which they did not quit

but

but in consideration of a contribution paid them for its ransom. Valens afterwards kindled the war by his imprudent conduct.

They had sent three thousand men to the assistance of Procopius, looking upon him to be the lawful emperour, because he was cousin to Julian. This corps, being surrounded in their retreat, laid down their arms, and were treated as prisoners: the emperour refusing to release them, a war became unavoidable; however, it must be allowed that he made preparations for it with prudence. His economy furnished him with sufficient funds for carrying it on, and he was enabled even to diminish instead of augmenting the taxes. By the superiority of his forces he obliged the barbarians, after three campaigns, to accept the terms he was pleased to prescribe, and to engage not to pass the Danube: but, without laying aside their resentment, they only waited a more favourable opportunity; and we shall see Valens at last sink under their efforts.

Valens makes war against them with success.

On the other side, Valentinian defeated the Alemains at Sultz on the Necker, and afterwards concluded a treaty, by which it was stipulated, that neither of them should invade the territories of the other. But the Romans violated their agreement by erecting forts on the lands of the barbarians, who in return cut the workmen to pieces. Thus treaties, concluded with a treacherous design, served only as a preparation for new scenes of massacre. The Saxons, another tribe of barbarians, who sailed up the rivers in light barks, and extended their depredations far and wide, likewise experienced the perfidy of the Romans. A truce had been granted them with permission to retire; but they were intercepted by an ambush, in which they all perished, after defending themselves like madmen. No advantage could be reaped from such injurious conduct, unless the Romans could have exterminated innumerable nations whose revenge they provoked.

Treachery of the Romans to the Alemains and Saxons.

Soon after, Macrian, king of the Alemains, raising new disturbances, Valentinian, in order to engage him

Another affair in Germany.

in a quarrel with a foreign enemy, ſolicited the king of the Burgundians, a nation near the head of the river Meine, to join his forces againſt the common enemy. The Burgundians marched to the banks of the Rhine; but, not being joined by the Romans as they expected, flew into a rage at the diſappointment, and, inſtead of attacking the Alemains, returned to their own country, after maſſacring all the ſubjects of the empire who fell into their hands.

Valentinian's cruelty.

The emperour did not ſpare his own ſubjects; it is true he enacted excellent laws, but his impetuous and violent temper prompted him to acts of cruelty and injuſtice. A governour having ſolicited preferment to a better employment—*As he is not content with his preſent office*, cried the emperour, *I will give him another: cut off his head*; which order was immediately put in execution. He fed two favourite bears with the carcaſes of thoſe perſons whom he cauſed to be put to death.

Maximin, prefect of Gaul, enjoyed the greateſt ſhare of his confidence, a man of a ſanguinary temper, who had the effrontery to ſay—*No man muſt flatter himſelf that he is innocent, when it is my pleaſure he ſhould be guilty.*—The Romans became every day more barbarous and abandoned.

Two kings treacherouſly murdered by the Romans.

We ſhudder at beholding them treacherouſly embruing their hands in the blood of princes. Para, king of Armenia, being ſuſpected by Valens, count Trajan was employed to deſtroy him; and he was aſſaſſinated at an entertainment to which he had been invited. Gabinius, king of the Quadi, having made ſome complaints, becauſe Valentinian had erected a fort in his territories, a ſon of the prefect Maximin was ſent into the country with the title of duke, by whom that unſuſpecting prince was in like manner invited to an entertainment, and murdered as he roſe from table.

375. Death of Valentinian I.

This infamous deed occaſioned the emperour's death. The Quadi paſſed the Danube, and laid waſte the country with fire and ſword; when Valentinian in return ravaging their lands, they ſent him a ſubmiſſive deputation,

tion, consisting of the principal men of the nation; but their dress was so mean, and their appearance so rustic, that he took this embassy for an insult, and, straining his voice, in a fit of rage, burst a vein, and soon after expired.

VALENS *in the East*.—GRATIAN *in the West*.

375. Gratian succeeds Valentinian.

GRATIAN, eldest son of Valentinian, then sixteen years of age, had borne the title of Augustus from his ninth year. This religious prince, who was a pupil of the poet Ausonius, had received a pious and polite education, rather than one proper to qualify him for the government of an empire; and to an excellent disposition joined a weakness of character which might be attended with dangerous consequences. The army associated with him his brother Valentinian II. an infant of four years of age, for whom he entertained a paternal affection. Gratian begun his reign with an act of the greatest injustice; so obnoxious are princes to the commission of enormous faults, when, their own judgment being insufficient to direct them, they are blindly guided by the passions of other men. The most spotless innocence was blackened to him by the intrigues of the court, and he caused the famous count Theodosius to be executed at Carthage; a man, who had a little before suppressed a rebellion raised by an African prince; who had saved Britain; on all occasions shewn himself the firmest support of the empire; and heightened the lustre of his triumphs by the modesty of his behaviour.

He puts to death count Theodosius, a great man.

The prefect Maximin was probably the cause of his condemnation, but he afterwards met with the like fate. Being convicted of several crimes, he was beheaded, as were two other instruments of tyranny. The emperour restored the ancient privilege of the senators, not to be put to the torture; an exemption which the barbarous Maximin had always treated with contempt.

Maximin justly punished.

Valens degenerates into a tyrant.

The East grew every day more unhappy under Valens. That diſtruſtful, mean ſpirited and cruel prince had for ſome time curbed or diſſembled his vices. Though a perſecutor of the orthodox religion, he had at leaſt ſhewn moderation and equity in other reſpects, and had gained honour by his defeat of the Goths; but, elated by ſome ſlight advantages over the Perſians, he thought himſelf entitled to liſten only to the voice of flattery, and give the rein to his paſſions: every one was ſacrificed whom calumny blackened; and he became inexorable in the exerciſe of deſpotiſm; for it was a maxim with him, *that whoever was eaſily appeaſed, eaſily forſook the path of juſtice.* Public hatred and frequent conſpiracies demonſtrated the falſehood of his maxim, and the injuſtice of his government.

Conſpiracy of Theodorus cruelly puniſhed.

So eagerly did the people deſire his death, that they had recourſe to magic in order to diſcover his ſucceſſor. Theodorus, a popular man of reſpectable character, ſuffered himſelf to be deluded by the impoſtures of ſome pretenders to divination, who flattered him with being deſtined to the empire, and fell a ſacrifice to his fooliſh credulity. This plot occaſioned dreadful executions; the innocent and guilty ſuffered indiſcriminately; and the fictitious accuſation of magic ſubjected to the executioner thoſe who could not be charged with any real crime.

Maximus and other philoſophers condemned.

On that occaſion the fires were kindled for the puniſhment of philoſophers, the greateſt part of whom were infatuated with ridiculous viſions. With their books were burnt ſeveral treatiſes of natural philoſophy, juriſprudence, and even polite literature. The celebrated Maximus, Julian's preceptor, was beheaded at Epheſus. He owned that he was acquainted with the oracle in favour of Theodorus, but added that the honour of philoſophy prohibited him from betraying the ſecret of his friends. "His death," ſays M. Le Beau, "appeared "unjuſt to none but the zealous partiſans of idolatry." But the crime for which he ſuffered was neither well authenticated nor in its nature capital; or is it to be

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed that he ought, at ſuch a diſtance of time, to have been puniſhed for teaching Julian falſe doctrines?

The Huns cauſe a revolution in the empire.

All that the empire had hitherto ſuffered from the barbarians is nothing in compariſon of what we are now to relate. To form a juſt idea of the revolution, it is neceſſary to be acquainted with the Huns, who properly were the authors of it; a nation which had ſtruck ſuch terrour, that the hiſtorian Jornandes derives its origin from the commerce of devils with witches. The learned M. de Guignes has extracted from the Chineſe books an account of them not to be found elſewhere. The Huns, a people entirely unknown in Europe, where they were one day to commit ſuch devaſtations, were known in China more than two thouſand years before Chriſt. They inhabited a country on the north of that empire, extending five hundred leagues from weſt to eaſt, where they bordered on the Mantchew Tartars; and three hundred from north to ſouth, reaching to Tibet and the great wall of China.

They were known in China for a great many ages.

Manners of this ferocious people.

They were a people equally hideous in their appearance, and ſavage in their manners; who lived upon raw roots, or fleſh, with no other dreſſing than what it received between the backs of the horſes and the thighs of the riders; they looked upon every kind of cloſe habitation as a tomb; led a roving paſtoral life in the woods and foreſts, carrying their families in waggons; almoſt continually on horſeback, and never fighting on foot; of wonderful dexterity in ſhooting with the bow, even while they fled; they had their women in common; were unacquainted with every virtue, except an intrepid courage and uncommon fidelity to their word; made continual incurſions on the territories of their neighbours, and eagerly ſought every opportunity of ſeizing upon countries more favoured by nature than their own deſarts. It was to defend China againſt thoſe barbarians that the emperours built the great wall which extends about four hundred leagues. In a word, they were the moſt formidable people Tartary ever produced.

Civil

The Huns pour into Europe.

Civil wars having been kindled among them, the northern Huns were vanquiſhed, and retired to the weſt. Several hords rejoined near Siberia, and, being driven to the ſouth, by new tribes pouring into weſtern Tartary, paſſed the Wolga, and attacked the Alans, who dwelt upon the coaſts of the Palus Mæotis (the ſea of Zabache or Aſoph) a roving nation like themſelves, but of better make, and leſs ſavage, yet barbarians who flayed their ſlain enemies, and of the ſkin which they took off together with the head, made houſings for their horſes. The Alans fled, ſome to the eaſt, others to the weſt of the Tanais (Don) and a third party towards the Danube. The Huns occupied the vaſt country between the Wolga and the Tanais, but ſoon quitted it in queſt of other habitations.

They drive out the Alans, and afterwards the Goths.

Greedy of new conqueſts, they croſſed the Tanais, maſſacred the Alans and other barbarous nations, or obliged them to join their ſtandards, drove the Oſtrogoths from the Boryſthenes (the Dnieper) and afterwards from the Nieſter. At laſt they attacked the Viſigoths, whom they forced to retire acroſs the Danube. "Thoſe nations," ſays Monteſquieu, "ſeemed to pre-"cipitate themſelves upon one another; and Aſia ap-"peared to gain new weight in order to cruſh Europe."

376. The Viſigoths demand leave to paſs the Danube.

The Goths, whoſe king Ermaneric had extended his conqueſts from the Danube to the Baltic, being ſtruck with a panic, and looking upon the Huns as monſters who devoured men, only thought of finding an aſylum from their fury; with this deſign the Viſigoths, to the number of two hundred thouſand, preſented themſelves on the banks of the Danube, earneſtly entreating the Romans to grant them a paſſage and receive them into the empire as ſubjects, who would ſpend the laſt drop of their blood in its defence. Meſſengers were diſpatched to know the pleaſure of Valens, who, delighted with the acquiſition of a nation entirely conſiſting of ſoldiers, without reflecting that they might one day become formidable enemies, granted them a ſettlement in Thrace, on condition that they delivered up their arms

Received by Valens.

before

before they paſſed the river. But the Romans were more eager to plunder than diſarm them; and the greateſt part of the barbarians, taking advantage of this fatal avidity, preſerved their ſwords and javelins, for which they willingly gave up every thing elſe.

The Oſtrogoths next appeared, after having encamped for ſome time in the neighbourhood of the Nieſter. The emperour at laſt began to be afraid of admitting ſuch a multitude of dangerous gueſts, and rejected their demand; but his troops having quitted the Danube in order to eſcort the new comers, whom they wanted to remove to the interiour parts of the country, they paſſed without oppoſition. Thus was the barrier thrown down between the Romans and that nation by which they had been ſo long menaced.

The Oſtrogoths paſs againſt his will.

Theſe barbarians being once within the limits of the empire, it was indiſpenſably neceſſary to watch them carefully, and avoid giving them the leaſt cauſe of provocation; but Lupicinus, count of Thrace, obſerved a quite contrary conduct. He prohibited them from purchaſing proviſions; and, without taking any proper precautions to keep them under, drove them to the utmoſt pitch of fury. Under the conduct of Fritigern, they overſpread Thrace like a deluge, filled it with blood and devaſtation, and already ſtruck the Romans with conſternation; after which, they invited the Huns and Alans, who had driven them out of their territories, to increaſe their army and ſhare in the ſpoils; for it was from ſuch junctions that the barbarians ſometimes became ſo formidable.

Theſe barbarians, ill treated, pillage Thrace.

Valens concluded a peace with Sapor in order to march in perſon to the defence of Thrace. From a groundleſs perſuaſion that the Goths would defend the empire, he had diſcharged the greateſt part of the old troops; and levied from the provinces and cities a tax, inſtead of the quota of ſoldiers they uſually furniſhed; in a word, he had drawn the enemy upon himſelf, after parting with the neceſſary means of defence. His army was compoſed of raw troops, haſtily levied, at a time when

Valens marches againſt them with undiſciplined troops.

when he had the greateſt need of brave and well diſciplined forces.

378. He rejects Gratian's aid, and loſes the battle of Adrianople.

He arrived at Conſtantinople, the environs of which were already infeſted with the barbarians; and Gratian, who had defeated the Alemains, was marching in perſon to his aid; but from motives of jealouſy and vanity he would not wait for his colleague, who, he was afraid, would ſhare with him the honour of the victory. His hopes were cruelly blaſted by the battle of Adrianople, in which Fritigern, joining addreſs to bravery, cut the Roman army in pieces. Valens periſhed, but the circumſtances of his death are unknown. It is ſaid, that being wounded he retired to a cottage, which the Goths burned down without knowing that he was in it. It is added, that the people of Antioch, to expreſs their hatred of him, had formerly a cuſtom of ſaying, by way of imprecation, *So may Valens be burned alive.* The report of this imprecation, with the burning of the cottage, was ſufficient to make that account the moſt current, becauſe it approached neareſt to the marvellous.

The circumſtances of his death uncertain.

The Goths miſcarry in ſieges, from their ignorance; but ravage the country from Greece to Pannonia.

Had the Goths underſtood the art of beſieging towns, Thrace muſt have been entirely ſubdued. But they were not even acquainted with the machines neceſſary for that purpoſe, and, though accuſtomed to brave death, were ſo terrified by a large ſtone ſhot from the walls of Adrianople, that had it not been for the interpoſition of their generals, they would have immediately taken flight. After fruitleſsly attacking Adrianople, Perinthus, and Conſtantinople, they ſpread their ravages over a wide extent of country; and, being joined by other troops of barbarians, carried havoc into Achaia on one ſide, and Pannonia on the other. Fritigern, amazed at meeting with no reſiſtance, could not help expreſſing his ſurpriſe at the imprudence of the Romans, who thought themſelves maſters of a country which they could not defend: *They unqueſtionably poſſeſs it*, ſaid he, *by the ſame title that flocks poſſeſs the meadows where they feed.*

GRATIAN *and* VALENTINIAN II. *in the West*; *and* THEODOSIUS *in the East.*

CHAP. I.

From the Elevation of Theodosius to the Death of Gratian.

379. Gratian takes Theodosius for his colleague, & gives him the empire of the East.

GRATIAN, on his arrival at Constantinople, perceiving the necessity of procuring to himself a powerful support, cast his eyes on Theodosius, the son of that great general whom he had put to death, and who after his father's execution had retired into Spain, where by his conduct he made himself equally respected and beloved. Being recalled to court and made general of the troops, he defeated an army of Goths and Sarmatians near the Danube, and was admitted to a share of the sovereignty by the emperour, who yielded to him the empire of the East, with a considerable part of Illyria, Dacia, Mæsia, and all Greece, countries which were then wasted by the barbarians.

Character of Theodosius.

The new Augustus, who was then thirty two years of age, by his courage and magnanimity shewed himself worthy of his dignity. *For a good prince*, said he, *the essential point is not to live long, but to live well.* His wife Flaccilla constantly excited him to the practice of virtue, of which she was a pattern, and often repeated to him these words—*Think of what you have been, and what you are.*

Reproaches thrown out against him by Zosimus.

Zosimus represents Theodosius as a voluptuous, unjust prince; governed by buffoons and eunuchs, who filled his court; in himself deserving no praise, and indebted for all his glory to his generals. But this author's partiality against the Christian emperours renders his testimony very suspicious.

The barbarians admitted into the troops.

It is with more reason that he reproaches Theodosius with having doubled the commanderies, whose number was aleady too burdensome to the public; and receiving the barbarians into the troops, whose discipline they necessarily corrupted, at the same time that they learned the art of conquering the Romans. An immense

number

number of Goths came from the north of the Danube to ſerve in the armies of the empire, the greateſt part with no friendly intentions. Our judgment of Theodoſius ſhall be determined by facts.

Zeal of Theodoſius in favour of religion.

We ſhall here give an account of ſome of his firſt laws, which principally relate to the general order of ſociety. Having received baptiſm during a dangerous diſtemper, with which he was ſeized in the ſecond year of his reign, he employed himſelf ſeriouſly in advancing the intereſts of religion. By a law addreſſed to the people of Conſtantinople, it is enacted, that all ſubjects ſhall profeſs the Catholic faith with regard to the article of the Trinity, and that they who do not conform ſhall ignominiouſly be called heretics; *until*, adds he, *they ſhall feel the vengeance of God and our own, according as it ſhall pleaſe divine Providence to inſpire us.* By another law, he ordered all criminal procedures to be ſtopped during the time of Lent. His reaſon for this was, that *the judges ought not to puniſh criminals at a ſeaſon when they expected from God the remiſſion of their own tranſgreſſions.* A motive leſs worthy of a legiſlator, as every act of juſtice is conformable to the laws of the Deity; and, in order to be effectual, ought, above all things, to be ſpeedy. After the example of Valentinian, in honour of the feſtival of Eaſter, he granted a free pardon to all criminals, except thoſe convicted of enormous crimes. We ſee that falſe ideas of devotion already influenced civil and political affairs. This was a great grievance, which will be found to increaſe in proportion as the true principles of government were neglected.

He proſcribes Arianiſm.

He orders criminal proceſſes to be ſuſpended during Lent.

Law for pardoning criminals at Eaſter.

The law of retaliation againſt falſe accuſers.

By a law really ſalutary (becauſe it had a tendency to remedy the horrible abuſes of information, which ſo many princes had condemned without being able to eradicate) it was enacted, that the accuſer ſhould be detained priſoner, in order to ſuffer the puniſhment of retaliation if the charge was found falſe and malicious; and that the proceſs ſhould be quickly brought to an iſſue, that the guilty perſon might be ſpeedily puniſhed, and the innocent obtain his deliverance.

The

The emperour prohibited the officers sent into the provinces from making any acquisition, or receiving any present; and established excellent regulations against the extortions of the magistrates. Some of his predecessors had done the same thing, though with little advantage, because laws are good only so far as they are executed, and under a bad government it is impossible to enforce them.

Extortions checked in the provinces.

If we consider those of Theodosius, we should imagine heresy utterly extinguished. He forbids the heterodox from holding any meeting even in private houses; and in case of transgression permits the Catholics to use force against them. He declares apostates and Manicheans incapable of making a will, or of receiving any legacy; and entertained such abhorrence against the latter, that he pronounced them worthy of death. He successively assembled a number of councils, to fix the faith which had been already fixed by a multitude of decisions. But without speaking of the vast disorders occasioned by permitting individuals to proceed to violence, we shall only observe, that these laws were so far from remedying the evil, that Theodosius was obliged to renew them every year. Not possessing a fund of knowledge sufficient to give him just ideas on that subject, he perhaps imagined that religious belief might be changed at the pleasure of an absolute master, which certainly was not the opinion of Lactantius, nor the other fathers of the church.

The laws against heretics too rigorous and ineffectual.

Gratian, with equal zeal, shewed still less prudence. Far from imitating his father, Valentinian, and supporting a worship which it was not in his power to destroy, he provoked the Pagans by his violent attacks on their religion. The altar of Victory in the senate was thrown down, the revenues of the pontiffs confiscated, the privileges of the inferiour priests and of the vestals withdrawn. In vain did the Pagan senators present a petition, praying a repeal of those ordinances; the emperour, prejudiced by St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who hoped the total ruin of idolatry, would not even admit their

Gratian's conduct alienates the Pagans.

their deputies to an audience; and their affections were ſtill more alienated by his refuſing the title of *Pontifex Maximus*, which was an appendage of the imperial dignity.

He favours the barbarians.

Rome being afflicted by a famine, the people did not fail to attribute it to the wrath of the gods; and Gratian, ſeeing himſelf become an object of hatred to his ſubjects, laviſhed his favours on the Alans, and other barbarians, whom he preferred to all offices in the court and army, and even wore their dreſs. A general revolt was ready to break out; and Maximus, governour of Britain, made the beſt uſe of the circumſtances. His troops, refuſing any longer to acknowledge an emperour whom they accuſed of diſavowing the Romans, proclaimed Maximus, and inveſted him with the purple, which, though he eagerly deſired, yet from a ſhameful hypocriſy, but often one of the favourite inſtruments of ambition, he ſeemed to accept with reluctance.

Maximus is proclaimed emperour, and marches againſt him.

383. Gratian abandoned and murdered.

Maximus, without loſing time, croſſed the northern part of Gaul, and met Gratian's army near Paris, who, being abandoned by his troops, fled precipitately towards the Alps. All the cities ſhutting their gates againſt him, he put on a diſguiſe in order to eſcape the purſuit of his enemies; but, no where meeting with a faithful friend, was betrayed and murdered. Perhaps the encomiums laviſhed upon him by St. Ambroſe are in part owing to prejudice. Philoſtorgus, an Arian, has compared him to Nero; but by the generality of hiſtorians he has been repreſented as a good emperour.

Great qualities and credit of St. Ambroſe.

It was a great advantage to the church that Ambroſe, who was reſpected and beloved by the emperours, uniting to a great genius the commanding influence of the primitive virtues, made religion ſtill more venerable by his example than authority. If we do not equally approve all his principles, and all the ſteps to which he was prompted by his zeal, we cannot ſuſpect the intentions of a man, who from a military life was called to the epiſcopacy as a pattern of ſanctity, and who made it a duty to ſell the church plate for the relief of the needy.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

From the Accommodation of Valentinian II *with Maximus, to the Maſſacre of Theſſalonica.*

VALENTINIAN II. colleague and brother of Gratian, being only twelve years of age, his mother Juſtina governed the empire in his name. As his tender age rendered him incapable of ſupporting the weight of a war, he concluded an accommodation with Maximus, who, on condition of poſſeſſing Gaul, Spain, and Britain, ſuffered him to retain the other provinces. Even Theodoſius acknowledged the tyrant's unlawful title, becauſe it was not yet in his power to dethrone him. 383. Valentinian II. comes to an accommodation with Maximus.

This prince, who had gained repeated victories over the barbarians, ſtill laboured to ſtrengthen his own authority. To the toils of war he joined the cares of legiſlation, but on ſome occaſions ſhewed that he wanted a ſufficient ſhare of ſagacity to entitle him to the name of a great legiſlator. Of this we have an inſtance in a law condemning to the flames couſins german who married without a ſpecial diſpenſation from the emperour. Law of Theodoſius reſpecting marriages between couſins german.

To enact ſo ſevere a puniſhment againſt alliances which had before been permitted, and after that ſtill to permit them by a diſpenſation, was a ſtrange inconſiſtency. Juſtinian reſtored the former latitude with regard to thoſe marriages; but the canon law has adopted the regulation of Theodoſius, and many new reſtrictions have in proceſs of time been added.

Notwithſtanding ſo many edicts in favour of Chriſtianity, the empire was ſtill diſturbed by the quarrels between the old and new religions. Prætextatus, whoſe eminent virtue made him the firmeſt ſupport of idolatry, at the ſame time that it procured him the eſteem even of the Chriſtians, was dead; but Symmachus, the new prefect of Rome, in ſome degree inherited his ſentiments. Several men of worthleſs characters being raiſed to dignities, this man, in a letter to Valentinian, had Death of Prætextatus. His ſucceſſor Symma-

chus makes a remonſtrance to Valentinian.

had the courage to tell him, *that men of honour could always be found to ſupply the offices of ſtate; that in order to diſcover them, the firſt ſtep was to reject all ſolicitors for places, and among the reſt would certainly be found people who deſerved them.* M. Le Beau conjectures that this remonſtrance was anſwered by a reſcript to Symmachus,

Deſpotic anſwer.

conceived in the following terms—*It is not permitted to reaſon on the deciſions of the ſovereign; to call in queſtion the merit of a man whom he hath honoured with his choice, is an offence againſt the majeſty of the emperour.* Here we ſee on one ſide the honeſt freedom of a magiſtrate zealous for the public weal; on the other, all the pride of deſpotiſm.

Petition of Symmachus in favour of idolatry.

Unhappily, this magiſtrate ſhewed himſelf equally a favourer of idolatry, whether he approved of it in itſelf, or rather believed it ingrafted into the conſtitution of the empire. He preſented to the emperour a petition in name of the ſenate, praying the reſtoration of the altar of Victory, and the privileges of the prieſthood; in which he inſiſted upon the toleration granted by Conſtantine, Jovian and Valentinian I. attributing the ancient proſperity of Rome to the worſhip of the gods, and its misfortunes to their vengeance.

St. Ambroſe cauſes it to be rejected.

St. Ambroſe immediaetly drew up a counter petition, in which he eloquently defended the cauſe of Chriſtianity, and remonſtrated with energy againſt the injuſtice of the Pagans. "They complain of their loſſes (ſays "he in his addreſs to the emperour) thoſe very men "who never ſpared our blood, who levelled our church-"es with the ground. They demand immunities, who "under Julian refuſed us the common privilege of "ſpeaking and teaching." His anſwer to Symmachus is ſtill more ſpirited. The council had given their opinions in favour of the petition; but Valentinian followed the advice of St. Ambroſe, and it was rejected. The Chriſtians were ſatisfied, and things ought to have been carried no farther; however, ſome calumniators were deſirous of ruining Symmachus; but he exculpated himſelf even by the teſtimony of pope Damaſus, as well as that of the whole city.

Could

Could any thing have prevented the triumph of Chriſtianity, it would have been the fatal diviſions among Chriſtians. Valentinian's mother Juſtina, an obſtinate Arian, eaſily infected him with her own errours. Being deſirous of procuring for that ſect a church in Milan, the emperour ſolicited the biſhop to grant them one, which St. Ambroſe refuſing, a party of ſoldiers were ſent with orders to ſeize it by force: but being excommunicated by him, the greateſt part retired; upon which the eunuch Calligonus, the grand chamberlain, was diſpatched from court with violent menaces againſt the prelate. *What! dare you diſobey the emperour?* ſaid he; *I ſhall ſever your head from your ſhoulders.* *Strike*, replied the holy man, *I am prepared to die; thou wilt do the office of an eunuch, I of a biſhop.* From that time Valentinian looked upon him as an enemy; and the lords of the court entreating him to go to the church in order to make a reconciliation, he replied—*I believe that if Ambroſe gave you orders, you would deliver me up to him pinioned hand and foot.* But the perſecution ceaſed upon the interpoſition of Maximus, whoſe power was dreaded.

Valentinian favours Arianiſm.

St. Ambroſe refuſes to grant the Arians a church, notwithſtanding the emperour's requeſt.

This uſurper had always affected a great zeal for religion. From the very beginning of his reign, his court, which he kept at Treves, was filled with biſhops, whoſe affluence ſeemed to juſtify his revolt. According to an eccleſiaſtical hiſtorian of that time, they proſtituted their dignity by mean flatteries. But St. Martin of Tours maintained the honour of the epiſcopate by never appearing before Maximus but in the character of a true miniſter of God, for the good of mankind and the glory of religion. A pattern of patience and charity, he taught by his example how errour ought to be corrected.

Affected zeal of Maximus.

The ſect of Priſcillianiſts, which reſembled ſeveral others, comprehended under the general name of Manicheiſm, began to make a noiſe in Spain, where it originally took its riſe. Its founder, Priſcillian, a Spaniſh biſhop, was on the point of being condemned in the council

Priſcillianiſts condemned to death, at the inſtigation of two biſhops.

council of Bourdeaux; but he refuſed to anſwer, and, in conſequence of an appeal to the emperour, was conducted to Maximus, together with his diſciples. Idatius and Ithachus, two biſhops of fiery zeal, perſecuted him with all the fury of fanaticiſm. In vain did Martin oppoſe proceeding to violence, and argue that in ſuch a caſe afflictive penalties would be unjuſt. Notwithſtanding his remonſtrances and entreaties, Maximus condemned the Priſcillianiſts to death. Such fruits had the ſanguinary zeal of thoſe prelates; a zeal which had been ſo clearly condemned by the Saviour of the world, and is equally repugnant to reaſon and the goſpel. The church teſtified its juſt abhorrence of the deed, and the two biſhops were excommunicated. The falſity of their principles was demonſtrated by experience; for the followers of Priſcillian reverenced him as a martyr, and his hereſy continued to the end of the ſixth century. Perſecution has almoſt always produced the ſame effect, of which we ſhall meet but with too many examples.

St. Martin oppoſes it in vain.

Effect of perſecution.

388. Maximus, under a maſk of zeal and hypocriſy, concealed the deſign of new uſurpations. He threatened Valentinian with a war, if he continued to favour Arianiſm; but this was only a vain pretence to ſeize upon his dominions. Ambroſe, who was ſent to negotiate with this zealous Catholic, only irritated him by refuſing to communicate with the two biſhops who had been authors of the maſſacre of the Priſcillianiſts. Maximus, without loſing a moment, paſſed the Alps; and the young emperour fled to Theodoſius, who armed in his cauſe, took into his pay a number of barbarians enured to fatigue, but always of a treacherous diſpoſition, and in Pannonia gained two victories over the uſurper, whom, conſidering his numerous army, it would perhaps have been impoſſible to vanquiſh had he kept behind the Julian Alps. In his flight he was taken near Aquileia, and conducted to Theodoſius; who, according to the generality of hiſtorians, after venting his reſentment in reproaches, was on the point of pronouncing his pardon, when ſome officers hurried him out of the preſence,

Maximus attempts to deprive Valentinian of his dominions.

Defeated and ſlain by Theodoſius.

fence, and ſtruck off his head. The Pagans had declared for the uſurper, in hopes that he would again eſtabliſh their religion; and the Chriſtians oppoſed him, becauſe he had ordered the rebuilding of a Jewiſh ſynagogue which had been burnt by the populace of Rome.

The Chriſtians diſaffected to him for cauſing a Jewiſh ſynagogue to be rebuilt.

A ſynagogue having been in like manner deſtroyed by the Chriſtians at Callinicum, and a temple of heretics by the monks, Theodoſius ordered them to be rebuilt, and theſe violences to be puniſhed. Ambroſe, who had lately diſſuaded him from reſtoring to the ſenate the altar of Victory, likewiſe obtained the revocation of an order which he thought contrary to the divine law. He wrote to the prince, that "the Chriſ-
"tians would be prevaricators if they obeyed him, or
"martyrs if they choſe rather to obey God." He added, "the violences ſo often committed againſt the
"church had been left unpuniſhed: What a ſhame,
"for a Chriſtian emperour to give room for the reproach
"of arming his hands only to revenge the cauſe of he-
"retics and Jews!" However, this holy prelate, even by his refuſal to communicate with the two ſanguinary biſhops, had given a proof of thoſe charitable principles which ought to regulate the conduct both of the prelates and the prince.

Violences of ſome Chriſtians, whoſe puniſhment is prevented by St Ambroſe.

Some Chriſtians, being emboldened to deſtroy and pillage the ſynagogues, committed ſo great exceſſes, that Theodoſius was afterwards obliged to cauſe them to be ſeverely puniſhed, declaring that the ſect of the Jews, not being proſcribed by any law, ought to have the free exerciſe of their religion through the whole empire.

Theſe violences are prohibited by a law.

Moderate in his victory, he had reſtored the whole empire of the Weſt to young Valentinian; and, during a reſidence of three years in Italy, governed for him as a father or guardian. His principal aim at that time being the deſtruction of Paganiſm, on his arrival at Rome he exhorted the ſenators to embrace a religion, whoſe morality, equally ſimple and ſublime, was capable of raiſing the moſt illiterate and loweſt of mankind above the greateſt philoſophers. It was repreſented to him, on the

Theodoſius governs for young Valentinian.

He wants to deſtroy idolatry.

other hand, that Rome had flouriſhed for more than twelve centuries under the protection of her gods; and that it would be imprudent to abandon them for a new religion, which perhaps would not produce equally good effects; upon which he diſmiſſed the ſenators, after declaring that the expenſe of their impious ſacrifices ſhould no longer be defrayed by the public treaſury, the ſtate being in want of ſoldiers, not of victims. The ſuppreſſion of the funds deſtined for the ſacrifices was in fact ſhutting up the temples.

The temples ſhut up, or demoliſhed.

Theodoſius likewiſe permitted the demolition of the monuments of idolatry, reſerving however the ſtatues to ornament the city; and iſſued ſevere orders through the whole empire, which were ſo rigidly put in execution at Alexandria, by Theophilus the biſhop, as to raiſe ſeditions among the Egyptians, who beheld with horrour their temples demoliſhed, and the cheats of their prieſts diſcovered, who eaſily deluded the people by pretended oracles delivered through hollow ſtatues. The ſame orders were executed in Syria; but in ſome places the reſiſtance was ſo violent that the temples were only ſhut up. As the popular religion was in ſome meaſure attached to ſenſible objects, it muſt of neceſſity fall with thoſe objects of its veneration.

Violences at Alexandria & elſewhere.

By a law of the emperour, paſſed in 392, every man was forbidden to celebrate any ſacrifice, or make any offering, even within his own houſe; or to light tapers, burn incenſe, or hang up garlands, in honour of the domeſtic gods; all who dared to offer a ſacrifice, or conſult the entrails of victims, were declared guilty of high treaſon; the houſes in which incenſe was offered, and the lands where trees were ornamented with fillets, were confiſcated: the officers and *defenders* of the cities were enjoined to lodge informations againſt the guilty; and the magiſtrates and their deputies were fined thirty pounds weight of gold, in caſe of failure in their duty. Notwithſtanding ſuch rigid laws, the private ſacrifices were long continued, and even ſome public idolatrous ſolemnities.

Private ſacrifices rigorouſly forbidden.

Theodoſius

Theodoſius eſtabliſhed *inquiſitors* for the diſcovery of heretics. He drove the Manicheans from Rome as infamous perſons; and on their death, ordered their goods to be diſtributed among the people. This ſeverity was copied by pope Siricius, who prohibited all that followed their here[illegible] from being received into the communion; and in caſe they were really converted, ordered them to be ſhut up in monaſteries, where they were ſubjected to ſevere penance, prohibiting them from receiving the euchariſt till on their death bed. This was not the method to facilitate converſions. The name of Manicheans became common to innumerable ſects of fanatics, always accuſed of ſecret abominations. Manicheiſm had its origin in Perſia; and its characteriſtic diſtinction was the doctrine of two eternal independent principles, the one good, the other bad. St. Auguſtine was tainted with this hereſy in his youth.

Inquiſitors for the diſcovery of heretics.

Manicheans perſecuted

Without examining how far princes may prudently carry violence in matters of religion, I obſerve, as an hiſtorian, that Theodoſius ſoon felt the inconvenience of thoſe exceſſes to which his laws gave birth; for every perſon imagining that he had a right to murder the Manicheans as proſcribed perſons, he was obliged to prohibit it under pain of death. Nothing is more dangerous than to arm one ſpecies of fanaticiſm againſt another; nor more difficult than to diſcover how far penal laws of this nature may be enforced, without hurting the cauſe of religion, or the rights of ſociety.

Inconvenience of theſe penal laws.

CHAP. III.

End of the Reign of Theodoſius.

ALL the glory which Theodoſius had acquired from his zeal and exploits was eclipſed by the celebrated maſſacre of Theſſalonica. That capital of Illyria was filled with a licentious people, paſſionately fond of public ſhews; and the governour, with ſeveral

390. Maſſacre of Theſſalonica commanded by Theodoſius.

perſons of diſtinction, being killed in a ſedition at the time of the races, for refuſing to ſet at liberty a charioteer whom he had impriſoned, the emperour was ſo provoked at the news, that though he was pacified, or appeared to be pacified, by the biſhops of a council of Milan, yet, at the inſtigation of his favourite Rufinus (an artful and hypocritical courtier, who had impoſed upon Symmachus, and even gained the friendſhip of St. Ambroſe) and his partiſans, an univerſal maſſacre of the Theſſalonians was ordered. This barbarous order was but too well executed. The inhabitants were aſſembled in the circus, under pretence of an exhibition of games, and ſlaughtered without diſtinction of age or ſex. Seven thouſand according to ſome, according to others fifteen thouſand, the greateſt part unqueſtionably innocent, were ſacrificed to an atrocious revenge.

St. Ambroſe makes him do penance.

This was an occaſion which ought to kindle the epiſcopal zeal in the cauſe of humanity. St. Ambroſe refuſed the emperour admittance into the church; and on his urging the example of David, replied, *Since you have imitated his crime, imitate his repentance.* Theodoſius obeyed, and after eight months retirement earneſtly entreated a reconciliation; when the biſhop, in order for the future to prevent the ill effects of his choler, cauſed him to paſs a law ſuſpending the execution of all ſentences of death, and even confiſcation till thirty days after they were paſſed; a law which, though founded upon laudable motives, is yet productive of inconveniences. After this the biſhop admitted him into the church, and preſcribed his penance; during which Theodoſius wore none of the ornaments of his dignity, though without loſing any portion of the authority which it is not in the power of the prieſthood to give, to take away, or to ſuſpend.

Theodoſius had before pardoned the mutineers of Antioch.

Some years before (387) religion had gained over him a more glorious victory, by hindering him from gratifying his revenge, and preventing his remorſe. The people of Antioch made an inſurrection on account of an extraordinary impoſt levied for the emperour's *decennals*,

nals; under which name was celebrated the tenth year of the emperour's reign, at the expenſe of the people, already overburdened with taxes. The ſedition was ſo violent, that the ſtatues of Theodoſius and his family were ignominiouſly thrown down. Though the magiſtrates had puniſhed the delinquents with the utmoſt ſeverity, he reſolved in his firſt tranſports to bury the inhabitants of the city under its ruins; but reaſon in ſome degree regaining her aſcendant, he contented himſelf with ordering it to be deprived of its territory, its privileges, and reduced to the ſtate of a common town, after all who had been concerned in the ſedition were executed: but Flavian, biſhop of Antioch, throwing himſelf at his feet, implored his clemency, and, by enforcing the motives of religion, obtained pardon for the unhappy people, who expected nothing but deſtruction. Can any perſon be blind enough, after this inſtance, not to ſee the advantages of Chriſtianity?

The monks become dangerous in the Eaſt.

As every human inſtitution degenerates, the monks, who were originally devoted to a deep ſolitude, and the practice of extraordinary virtues, were become too numerous to live in conformity to their rules. From that time, having for the moſt part only a falſe vocation, or loſing ſight of their duty; they frequented the cities, ſpent their time in diſputes, in attendance on the great, intrigues, cabals, intermeddling in all affairs civil and eccleſiaſtical, and often ſignalizing their fanatic zeal by intolerable violence. Upon a complaint from the magiſtrates, Theodoſius forbid the monks to appear in the cities, or quit their ſolitudes; but two years after he revoked his edict, which was the principal cauſe of the continual diſturbances in the Eaſt; where the monks acquired ſo great an aſcendant over the people as even to domineer in the courts; and roſe to ſuch a height of power, that none were choſen to biſhopricks except out of their number.

Theodoſius checks them too feebly.

392. Arbogaſtes deſtroys Valentinian II.

The Weſt, after the departure of Theodoſius, ſaw another revolution, ſimilar to that by which Gratian had fallen a ſacrifice. Valentinian had corrected his faults:

faults: he was juſt, ſober, aſſiduous; had got rid of his prejudices for Arianiſm, and promiſed an equitable government, when the ambition of a haughty ſubject expoſed him to the greateſt misfortunes. Arbogaſtes, by birth a Frank, of great abilities in war, reſpectable by his ſervices, and even honoured with the confidence of Theodoſius, at once aſſumed by his own authority the title of General. Valentinian attempting to make him reſign it—*I do not hold that title of you*, ſaid Arbogaſtes inſolently, *and I will keep it in ſpite of you*. After this declaration, that general ſoon perceived that he could not ſecure his life, except by the commiſſion of a crime. He cauſed the emperour to be deſtroyed, when only twenty years of age, and put Eugenius in his place, with a deſign to govern under his name.

Eugenius the new emperour.

This man, who was at firſt a teacher of rhetoric, had riſen to the poſt of ſecretary to Valentinian, and been artful enough to inſinuate himſelf into the friendſhip of St. Ambroſe, but could only be a phantom. He ſent deputies to Theodoſius, among whom he took particular care that there ſhould be a number of biſhops and prieſts whom he had gained by his artifices. Theodoſius diſſembled, received the deputies kindly, gave them hopes, and made preparations for war. Eugenius, maſter of the Weſt, on his arrival in Italy, conſented after a few refuſals to the re-eſtabliſhment of Paganiſm. The temples were again opened, and crowded by the worſhippers; for Rome could not conquer her ancient ſuperſtitions, and gave a viſible proof to what violence her enthuſiaſm had been inflamed by ſeverity.

Theodoſius diſſembles.

394. He defeats Eugenius, and condemns him to death.

Mean time Theodoſius ſeemed in perfect tranquillity, but this was only with deſign to ſecure the ſucceſs of his enterpriſe. At laſt, having collected his forces, he paſſed the Alps, and near Aquileia gained a deciſive victory. Eugenius was dragged to his feet, loaded with chains, and condemned to death. Arbogaſtes, obliged to wander as a fugitive, and hotly purſued, by a voluntary death eſcaped the hands of the executioner. The emperour treated the reſt of his accomplices with clemency.

mency. The following year he died, in the fiftieth of his age, after dividing the empire between his two ſons, Arcadius and Honorius; to the firſt of whom he aſſigned the Eaſt, to the latter the Weſt. He dies the year following.

The reign of Theodoſius appears the more glorious, as, after him, we ſhall only meet with ſcenes of ruin and misfortune; and it required uncommon abilities to ſuſpend the revolutions. Every thing prognoſticated decay--An arbitrary government, without any fixed rules; a mixture of barbarians, who had corrupted the ancient principles; millions of other barbarians, who waited the moment of ſwallowing up the empire as a prey worthy of their rapacity; pompous courts, filled with eunuchs and miniſters of voluptuouſneſs, where intrigue and adulation almoſt always reigned triumphant; luxury carried to ſuch a pitch in the midſt of the moſt wretched poverty, that in ſome houſes there might be reckoned no leſs than two thouſand domeſtics adorned with bracelets and collars of gold; a general corruption of manners, from the court to the cottage; religious quarrels, which broke all the bonds of concord among ſubjects divided on their articles of faith; and a beginning of ignorance, which every day more and more darkened the light of reaſon as well as a taſte for the really beautiful. Inſtead of juſt ideas and ſolid matter, were ſubſtituted plays of words and vain ſubtilties. When literature decays, and cultivated minds take wrong paths, the ſcience of government muſt neceſſarily be obſcured: accordingly we have already obſerved many injudicious and even pernicious laws. Every thing prognoſticated fatal revolutions.

The moſt eſtimable profane authors of thoſe times are Ammianus Marcellinus, whom I have ſeveral times mentioned; Eutropius, author of the Epitomé; Libanius, a ſophiſt, who is ſometimes eloquent; Symmachus, whoſe letters are extant in ten books; Themiſtius, prefect of Conſtantinople, a philoſopher, eſteemed by all the emperours; Eunapius and Zoſimus, reproached for their partiality againſt the Chriſtians; Vegetius, who wrote upon the military art; and, to cloſe the liſt, Profane authors.

Pappus

Pappus and Theon, mathematicians of Alexandria. Theodoſius ordered the works of Porphyry to be burnt.

The intereſt of money fixed at twelve per cent.

It is not to be wondered that the true principles of the finances ſhould be unknown, becauſe the Romans had never poſſeſſed but a very imperfect knowledge of their theory. In order to put a check upon uſury, which had broken through all bounds, Theodoſius fixed the intereſt of money on the ancient footing at twelve per cent.

Invention of window glaſs.

To his age is referred the invention of window glaſs: it is remarkable that glaſs had been known for ſeveral ages before men thought of applying it to this purpoſe. Wheel clocks, wind and water mills, were inventions reſerved for ages of barbariſm, where the human mind was on the verge of ſinking into the thickeſt darkneſs.

LAST

LAST EPOCHA.

THE BARBARIANS SETTLED IN THE EMPIRE.

ARCADIUS *in the Eaſt*, HONORIUS *in the Weſt.*

CHAP. I.

To the Time of Alaric's firſt Expedition into Italy.

395. Arcadius in the Eaſt, and Honorius in the Weſt, princes deſtitute of reſolution and capacity.

WE are now to give the hiſtory of two young princes, who, from their age, character, and want of education, cauſed by a defect of genius, were totally unable to ſupport the weight of government in ſuch tempeſtuous times as would have required the utmoſt efforts of men of uncommon abilities. We ſhall ſee their miniſters, women, and eunuchs, manage the government for them; and the empire, falling into ruins on every ſide, ſink at once under the miſeries of a vicious adminiſtration and the attacks of numberleſs foreign enemies. Arcadius was but ſeventeen years of age, and Honorius ten. Rufinus, miniſter of the firſt, and Stilico of the other, very ſoon abuſed the authority which had been entruſted to them by Theodoſius.

Rufinus & Stilico, their miniſters.

Rufinus, a native of Gaſcony, had raiſed himſelf about the end of the laſt reign to be prefect of the Eaſt, which he attained by working the ruin of Tatian, who held that office, and of Proculus, the ſon of Tatian, the prefect of Conſtantinople, two eſtimable men, of whom he was both the accuſer and the judge. Strange, that Theodoſius ſhould permit it! The ambition of this miniſter made him capable of ſacrificing every thing to his own intereſt, which he artfully concealed under the maſk of juſtice. Stilico, a Vandal by birth, and related to the imperial family, was no leſs ambitious and unprincipled than the other; but he was more circumſpect, of ſuperiour abilities, affecting a life of magnificence,

cence, and carrying his purpoſes by the low means of a corrupt, ſelfiſh heart. Under theſe two miniſters every thing was ſet up to ſale, and offices were ſo prodigiouſly increaſed, that the prince's *agents*, whom Julian had reduced to ſeventeen, were now ten thouſand. We may judge of other things by this ſpecimen.

Every thing ſold, and offices created beyond number.

When acquiring a fortune is the main object, every idea of patriotiſm is loſt, and miniſters of ſuch diſpoſitions will not heſitate to ſell their maſter when they can turn it to their own advantage. Rufinus dreaded Stilico, who alledged, that he had been appointed regent of both empires by Theodoſius; but he was ſtill more jealous of Eutropius, a worthleſs eunuch, who had ſprung from the dunghill, and acquired ſuch influence on the mind of Arcadius, that he made him marry Eudoxia, though Rufinus intended him for his own daughter. Rufinus, whoſe ambition made him deſirous in ſome degree to ſhare the title of Auguſtus with his maſter, took a deſperate reſolution, worthy of ſuch a deteſtable character.

Rufinus jealous of Stilico & Eutropius the eunuch.

To prevent the attempts of Stilico, and to make himſelf of greater conſequence to Arcadius, he ſecretly invited the barbarians to invade the empire. The Huns immediately croſſed the Tanais, came down from mount Caucaſus, laid waſte Armenia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Syria, and even made Antioch tremble. The Goths, led by Alaric, having at the ſame time paſſed the Danube, poured in upon the provinces lying between the Adriatic and Conſtantinople. Rufinus entered their camp to negotiate a peace, and perſuaded them to withdraw from that city; but though he wanted to claim credit to himſelf from the tranſaction, his ſucceſs in the negotiation is a ſtrong proof againſt him.

He invites the barbarians to invade the empire.

His negotiation with Alaric.

By the indefatigable care, abilities and military reputation of Stilico, he made the barbarians in the Weſt deſirous of peace. He immediately marched againſt Alaric, and with a numerous army, compoſed of the troops of Eugenius and Theodoſius, came up with him on the plains of Theſſaly. In the inſtant when they were

Stilico forſaken by the army in the Eaſt.

were going to engage, the troops that belonged to Arcadius were ordered to withdraw from the reſt, and return to Conſtantinople; an order which had been dictated by Rufinus to check the progreſs of his rival.

Gainas revenges the affront by the murder of Rufinus.

Stilico would not by any means detain them, but ſent them back under the command of Gainas, a brave Gothic officer, who was privy to his ſchemes of revenge, and reſolved to execute them. It was with ſorrow that the army of the Eaſt ſeparated from that of the Weſt; and Arcadius, with his miniſter, whom he was to have nominated his colleague on that very day, went out of the city to receive the homage of his troops; when, upon a ſignal from Gainas, they ſet upon Rufinus, and murdered him in the emperour's preſence. He was ſucceeded by the eunuch Eutropius, who enriched himſelf with his ſpoils, and, like him, became the ſcourge of the ſtate and the people.

396. Alaric attacks Greece.

After the retreat of Stilico (for when he had loſt half of his army he durſt not venture an engagement) Alaric fell upon Greece, took Athens, and ruined Peloponneſus. Though that country made a part of the eaſtern empire, the brave Stilico entered it to attack the Goths, without conſulting Arcadius, who was ſunk in effeminacy. He ſurrounded them in the foreſts of Arcadia, where they muſt have periſhed, if Stilico, who was as much a man of pleaſure as of courage, had not given himſelf up to debauchery, inſtead of profiting by the ſituation into which he had reduced the enemy. Alaric did not let ſlip the opportunity to eſcape, and carried off all his plunder.

He is repulſed by Stilico, who is declared the enemy of the empire by means of Eutropius.

Eutropius, induced by hatred againſt Rufinus, had formerly united with Stilico, but from jealouſy was now become his enemy, and cauſed him to be declared the enemy of the empire, for having attacked the barbarians in Greece, while he himſelf had abandoned it to be plundered. Not ſatisfied with this inſult, he had the meanneſs to treat with Alaric, and to procure for him the government of eaſtern Illyria, in which Greece was comprehended. This inſolent ſlave made himſelf equally

Inſolence of that eunuch.

equally odious and ridiculous, by proſcribing ſome of the moſt deſerving people of the ſtate, and oppreſſing the unhappy with new grievances, as well as by putting himſelf at the head of the army, without either ability or inclination to perform any military exploit. Hoping to govern his maſter by procuring him amuſements, he perſuaded the prince to make an annual excurſion to Ancyra, a great diſtance from Conſtantinople, where the ſummer was ſpent in ſplendid feſtivals; after which, Arcadius returned to his capital in triumph.

He amuſes Arcadius, that he may govern him.

During one of theſe journies, a dreadful law was promulgated, by which the intereſt of the emperour was ſacrificed to that of his miniſter. It declared, that whoever conſpired or ſchemed a conſpiracy againſt the life of the emperour's counſellors, or any of the chief magiſtrates, ſhould not only be condemned to death as guilty of high treaſon, though the plot ſhould be in no part executed, but likewiſe their children be doomed to infamy and perpetual poverty; and all who ſhould intercede for them be declared infamous; all who were concerned in the offence, they and their children were to be ſubject to the ſame puniſhments; rewards were promiſed to whoever ſhould diſcover the conſpiracy from the beginning, and impunity to accomplices revealing it. Even Sejanus had conceived nothing ſo bad during the reign of Tiberius. The crime of high treaſon being extended to ſo many objects, leſſened the horrour of attempts againſt the perſon of the prince; but Arcadius had not capacity to diſtinguiſh the difference, and thought only as Eutropius pleaſed to dictate.

Tyrannical law in favour of miniſters.

397. Rebellion in Africa againſt Honorius.

The talents of Honorius were not ſuperiour to thoſe of his brother; and the contempt with which they were regarded diſpoſed the people to rebel. Count Gildo, an old, cruel, wicked debaucheé, preſumed to ſhake off the yoke of the empire in Africa; and murdered the children of his brother Maſcezil, who had taken ſhelter in Rome, and who from that time became his moſt irreconcilable enemy. Stilico ſent Maſcezil againſt him with a ſmall army, and propoſed to follow him to con-

clude

clude the war; but it was ended the firſt campaign, in which Gildo was defeated, and ſtrangled himſelf with his own hands. Maſcezil at his return was rewarded with the blackeſt treachery, as Stilico, either from diſtruſt or jealouſy, cauſed him to be thrown headlong from a bridge into a river, where he was drowned.

That miniſter was at leaſt poſſeſſed of abilities and perſonal courage, which ſeemed to conceal his faults; but Eutropius was only a compound of baſeneſs and malignity; yet he entirely governed the emperour, was flattered by the court, and deteſted by the people. Arcadius, not ſatisfied with raiſing him to the rank of patrician, named him conſul; for when the empire was divided, each emperour named a conſul, one for the Eaſt, the other for the Weſt: but this ſcandal to the conſulſhip excited an univerſal, though ſilent, indignation; and the eunuch, who exulted as if he had been out of fortune's reach, very ſoon experienced the inſecurity of a deteſted elevation, founded upon guilt and meanneſs. Eutropius raiſed to the conſulſhip.

His ſecret enemy, count Tribigild, a Gothic officer, revolted, and laid waſte the country of Aſia; and Gainas, a relation of the count, who held a correſpondence with him, was ſent to command againſt him. Another army was diſpatched, under the conduct of Leo, a wool carder, and a favourite worthy of Eutropius. Tribigild, with three hundred men, ſurpriſed this ridiculous general in the night; and, being ſeconded by Gainas, gained a complete victory. Gainas then wrote to the emperour, that he could not conquer Tribigild, who had made an offer of peace, upon condition that Eutropius ſhould be delivered up to him; and adviſed him not to heſitate between his own ſafety and the fate of his miniſter. 399. Tribigild and Gainas conſpire againſt Eutropius.

Arcadius, terrified by the Goths, and a ſlave to Eutropius, could not determine what ſtep to take. Such was the aſſurance of the eunuch, that he one day threatened to turn the empreſs Eudoxia out of the palace. This haughty princeſs, by complaints, tears, and entrea- The empreſs inſulted by the eunuch.

ties,

Arcadius consents to his being arreſted.

treaties, at laſt prevailed with her huſband to grant an order for his being arreſted. He fled for ſhelter to a church; and the biſhop, St. Chryſoſtom, who was guided by the opinions of the times, which held aſylums inviolable, prohibited the guards of the prince from entering, and the emperour came to entreat the ſoldiers not to violate it; but Eutropius, having left it in the night with a deſign of making his eſcape, was ſeized and baniſhed for life.

Ridiculous proceſs to ruin him.

Both Gainas and Eudoxia wanted to have his life, and carried on an extravagant proceſs againſt the exile. They accuſed him of having uſurped the imperial privileges, becauſe at the feſtival, on his being nominated conſul, he had made uſe of the Cappadocian horſes, which were intended ſolely for the emperour; and, as if he had not been ſufficiently criminal in other reſpects, he was condemned on this frivolous pretence, and beheaded.

400. Gainas rebels, and governs Arcadius.

Arcadius, being delivered from one imperious ruler, found another equally ſo in his wife, who became the arbitreſs of the empire, though by no means worthy of governing, as ſhe was guided entirely by women and eunuchs. Gainas, whoſe treachery was evident, though he put on a maſk of fidelity, very ſoon rebelled openly, and marched towards Conſtantinople. The emperour wrote to him immediately to inform him that he was ready to ſatisfy his demands as ſoon as he ſhould make them known. The general of the Goths at firſt required, that three of the chief nobles of the court ſhould be put into his power: this was agreed to, and they voluntarily went to ſurrender. He next required that the emperour ſhould meet him at Chalcedon to conclude a treaty of peace. Arcadius went to Chalcedon, continued the rebel his general, beſtowed upon him the enſigns of the conſulſhip, and Gainas, with ſtill the ſame inclinations for rebellion, returned to Conſtantinople. The emperour was nothing in his preſence!

He rebels again, be-

As the barbarians were eaſily led by motives of intereſt to change their religion, the Goths of the empire had

had embraced Chriſtianity; but, being moſtly Arians, they were excluded from the churches; Gainas therefore demanded a church for himſelf and his people. Arcadius repreſented to St. Chryſoſtom the danger of refuſing; but the intrepid biſhop would not conſent, and therefore the Goths again took up arms. Gainas, not being able to take the city, in which a number of his ſoldiers had been maſſacred, and more than ſeven thouſand burnt in a church, attempted to paſs the Helleſpont in wretched boats, and in the preſence of the enemy's fleet; but he did not ſucceed, and loſt a number more of his army in the attempt. He then retired towards the Danube, in hopes of finding an aſylum beyond that river; but the Huns, not chooſing ſuch a neighbour, attacked and defeated his army, Gainas himſelf having fallen in the engagement.

cauſe St. Chryſoſtom refuſes a church to the Goths.

Death of Gainas.

CHAP. II.

Alaric in Italy.—Gaul laid waſte, and Spain conquered by the Vandals, &c.

ALARIC, a general of abilities ſuperiour to Gainas, did not long continue at peace in Illyria, where he commanded; but, being proclaimed king of the Viſigoths by his army, who were diſſatisfied with the Romans, prepared to penetrate into Italy, and to take poſſeſſion of Rome. After one fruitleſs attempt, he paſſed the Alps, while the legions were employed in Rhætia againſt the Germans. The territory of Venice, and even Liguria, were already infeſted, and Rome trembled at their approach. Stilico repaired the walls, and encouraged Honorius, who wanted to leave Milan and retire into Gaul. He then aſſembled troops, deceived Alaric, by promiſing him a ſettlement beyond the Alps in the emperour's name, and then ſuddenly attacked him at Polentia, (at preſent a town in Piedmont.) The king of the Viſigoths defended himſelf with

401. Alaric, king of the Viſigoths, threatens Rome.

Stilico deceives him twice, but could not conquer him.

with ſuch courage and ability, that the victory was undecided. Upon the faith of a new treaty he began his march to return by the Julian Alps; when Stilico, by a ſecond act of treachery, though he could not conquer him, expoſed him to the danger of periſhing. Being abandoned by his ſoldiers, who deſerted from want of proviſions, and allurements offered to them by the enemy, he returned to Illyria, abhorring Roman treachery, and breathing vengeance.

Honorius removes his court to Ravenna.

The timid Honorius at that time transferred his court to Ravenna, a place of great ſtrength, from whence he could eaſily paſs to Epirus, ſo that it became the capital of the Weſt. Maximian had formerly fixed his court at Milan, that he might be near enough to protect the provinces; but the ſole object of Honorius was ſelf preſervation. It was to no purpoſe that Milan and Rome ſent deputies to prevail with the emperour that they might obtain the preference of Ravenna.

405. Stilico's ambitious deſigns.

The barbarians were now acquainted with the route to Italy, and the empire had no force to oppoſe them but mercenary troops, among whom were a number of barbarians, well inclined to betray their truſt; military diſcipline was entirely at an end in the army, and every ſentiment of honour and love of country effaced from the minds of the people; ſo that nothing could be reaſonably expected but a ſucceſſion of misfortunes. The ambitious policy of Stilico contributed to the public diſaſters: he hoped at leaſt that his ſon Eucherius, couſin of the two emperours, would ſucceed to the diadem; and that expectation was ſtrengthened by the wife of Honorius having no children. That he might accompliſh his purpoſe, he attempted to weaken and diſtreſs both empires. Theſe are the conjectures of hiſtorians, which have been ſometimes received as certain truths. According to them, Alaric ſeemed to be a neceſſary inſtrument, and was gained over by his offers to unite with him in conquering eaſtern Illyria, as part of the territory of Honorius; but that deſign was interrupted

in

in the execution by an unexpected invaſion of the Goths.

Radagaiſus, their chief, with two hundred thouſand men, poured in upon Italy, where the minds of the Roman people were ſo depraved by ſuperſtition, and attached to idolatry, that they congratulated themſelves upon this invaſion. Being convinced that their gods were going to revenge their own cauſe, they inſulted Chriſtianity, which they ſaid was *the ruin of nations, and the ſcourge of the world*: but happily their hopes were fruſtrated. Radagaiſus laid ſiege to Florence, but without precaution or any knowledge of the art of war; when Stilico, having been reinforced by the Huns, and by a Gothic leader, attacked, defeated, made him priſoner, and cauſed him to be beheaded. Of the whole multitude of enemies, only twelve thouſand eſcaped, many more having fallen by hunger and diſeaſe than by the ſword.

Radagaiſus invades Italy.

The Pagans rejoice, but Stilico defeats the Goths.

Italy was ſcarcely freed from thoſe enemies, when a dreadful irruption of barbarians, Alans, Vandals, and Suevi, overwhelmed the Roman power in Gaul. If it is true, as has been mentioned, though very improbable, that Stilico had invited them to make the attempt, he did not ſuſpect that they could have been ſo ſpeedy, or have executed it before the conqueſt of Illyria, which he had projected with Alaric. To give up the empire to the rage of barbarous enemies was a very extraordinary method of acquiring the ſovereign power.

406. Gaul overrun by barbarians.

The Vandals, who were of Gothic origin, by mixing with the ancient Vinili, were in ſome degree become Germans, and had communicated their name to ſeveral German nations; for it was given to the Burgundians, Rugii, Heruli, Lombards, Angli or Engliſh, Thuringians, &c. Thoſe we ſpeak of inhabited the country of Pannonia, a province of the empire where Stilico was born.

Vandals.

The Suevi, who were at firſt a wandering nation, had formerly occupied all the country between the Elbe, the Viſtula, the Danube, and the Baltic. Being after-

Suevi.

wards divided into a number of hords, which overſpread the country of Germany, ſuch of them as preſerved the name of Suevi in the time of Auguſtus poſſeſſed the country eaſt of the Rhine, but were compelled to retire into Bohemia, a part of which was taken from them by the Vandals.

Alans. We formerly mentioned the Alans. From the time they had been driven from the banks of the Tanais by the Huns, they wandered along the Danube. They had been of great uſe in the armies of Theodoſius and Stilico; but, by ſerving for hire, they had learnt to conquer and ſtrip thoſe people whoſe battles they fought without attachment to their cauſe.

Theſe people met with no oppoſition, and were followed by a number of Alemains and Burgundians. Theſe three nations, having been joined on their march by a number of Huns, Sarmatians, &c. croſſed the Rhine near Mentz; and, meeting with no Roman garriſon, ſpread like a torrent as far as the Pyrenees. The Alemains and the Burgundians followed their ſteps; the laſt ſettling in Helvetia, and afterwards in the country of the Sequani and Edui; the others on the banks of the Rhine, from Baſle to Mentz. The whole country of Gaul was ſtrewed with human carcaſes. The army in Britain, diſmayed at the thoughts of ſuch a deluge of enemies, and deſpairing of aſſiſtance, declared a private ſoldier, of the name of Conſtantine, emperour, who was afterwards acknowledged in Gaul, and whoſe ſon, Conſtans, made himſelf maſter of Spain, whom Honorius was compelled to receive as his colleague.

A ſoldier of the name of Conſtantine made emperour.

408. Alaric returns again into Italy. At the ſame time Alaric, tired of waiting three years for Stilico to join him in making the conqueſt of Illyria, advanced with his army towards Italy, and demanded a ſum of money to indemnify him for the expenſe of his expedition, and the preparations he had made. The emperour was then at Rome, and it was debated in the ſenate what ſteps were proper to be taken: the majority were for war, but Stilico cauſed it to be determined to give four thouſand pounds weight of gold; upon which one of the ſenators exclaimed, as Cicero did on

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another occaſion—*This is not a treaty of peace, but a contract of ſlavery.* The miniſter maintained that Alaric had demanded nothing but what he was well entitled to, as he had remained three years in Epirus for the ſervice of Honorius. A perſon who had been indebted to Stilico for his fortune took the preſent opportunity of ruining him.

Olympius conſpires the ruin of Stilico.

This courtier, whoſe name was Olympius, repreſented by the Pagans as a hypocrite, and by the Chriſtians as a faithful, deſerving ſubject, perſuaded the emperour that his miniſter intended to uſurp the throne; that he was the author of the invaſion by the barbarians; that his ſon, who was bred a Pagan, was the object to whom the Pagans looked up as their chief hope; and that medals were already ſtruck, bearing the impreſſion of the father and the ſon. The accuſer, diſtruſting the want of ſteadineſs in the prince, found means to compel him to act openly. He gained over the troops that were aſſembled at Pavia, and having inſpired them with his own ſentiments, cauſed all the friends of the miniſter to be maſſacred in a mutiny. The ſoldiers, being let looſe, pillaged the town without ſhewing the leaſt reſpect for Honorius, who endeavoured in vain to appeaſe them.

Stilico ſeized and executed.

Stilico was at that time in Ravenna; and, knowing that Olympius with the emperour's authority had ſent an order for his being arreſted, took refuge in a church. The officers went thither to find him, and having ſworn that they would make no attempt upon his life, he delivered himſelf up into their hands; but they immediately produced a ſecond order, by which he was ſentenced to be put to death as a traitor to his prince and his country, and his head was cut off. His ſon likewiſe ſuffered the ſame fate. Thoſe of his chief friends, who were ſtill living, a ſecretary of ſtate, and a captain of the guards, were put to the torture; but the torments they ſuffered could not draw from them any confeſſion.

Deteſtable conduct of Olympius.

Olympius, having enriched himſelf with the ſpoils of Stilico, in his turn governed in the moſt abſolute manner, diſpoſing of every thing in favour of his own creatures.

tures. Even ſuppoſing Stilico guilty, the behaviour of Olympius proves him to have been a worthleſs character.

Maſſacre and revolt

The Roman ſoldiers, to complete their inhumanity, maſſacred the wives and children of the barbarians who had been attached to the former miniſter; ſo that they, to the number of thirty thouſand, tranſported with rage and indignation, fled to the camp of Alaric, to ſerve under his ſtandard.

Olympius zealous in ſupport of the church.

Since Olympius has been praiſed by Symmachus, we need not be ſurpriſed at the encomiums which have been laviſhed upon him by St. Auguſtine, and other eccleſiaſtical writers, as they found a ſufficient motive in the laws which he made in favour of the church and the clergy; for the laws of Honorius were thoſe of his miniſters. Appeals to the biſhops were authorized in all civil cauſes; their deciſion was final, and the ſecular power obliged to execute the ſentence. (By this law, if it had been continued in force, the lay courts muſt have been annihilated.) St. Auguſtin having complained to Olympius of the violences committed by the Pagans and heretics, they were excluded from the privilege of holding offices; the Catholics were put in poſſeſſion of all the churches; all Pagan ſolemnities were aboliſhed; the biſhops charged to attend to the execution of theſe orders, and the public officers to ſecond the biſhops, under the penalty of paying a fine of twenty pounds weight of gold. Whoever diſturbed the Catholics in the exerciſe of their religion were condemned to be put to death; and they who publicly oppoſed their tenets to be baniſhed. This was the way to ſecure the attachment of the orthodox, but to enrage the others, whom they ought by no means to have irritated.

Laws in favour of epiſcopal juriſdiction, and againſt Pagans & heretics.

409. It was found neceſſary to revoke the law which ex-

In the year 409, the emperour was obliged to revoke the law which excluded the Pagans from holding offices. Generides, a barbarian by birth, a Pagan, a worthy man, and brave officer, choſe rather to quit the ſervice than to betray his religion. *The law was not intended to affect you,*

you, ſaid Honorius to him, as if the laws were not made for the whole people; but Generides ſteadily refuſed the rank of general till that law was revoked.

cluded Pagans from holding offices.

After the death of Stilico, Alaric plainly foreſaw that the promiſed ſum would not be paid to him; but, that he might ſhew himſelf as juſt as the Romans were perfidious, he ſent to make the demand. His meſſage being treated with contempt by the emperour, and Olympius, without making any preparations, or aſſembling a ſufficient number of troops, having appointed generals as incapable as himſelf, the king of the Goths, who had been waiting in Noricum (in the circles of Bavaria and Auſtria) croſſed Italy with all the rapidity of a traveller who meets with no obſtruction, and arrived at the gates of Rome. Such was the barbarity of the Romans, that the ſenate then cauſed Serena, the widow of Stilico, and niece of Theodoſius, to be ſtrangled; a princeſs whom Honorius had long honoured as his mother, and who had been unjuſtly ſuſpected of carrying on a correſpondence with Alaric.

Alaric, to whom they had broken their promiſe, returned to Italy.

This brave and able conqueror making himſelf maſter of the Tiber, cut off their proviſions, and very ſoon reduced the city to extremity. Ravenna ſeemed to be at an infinite diſtance; they expected aſſiſtance in vain; and they at laſt ſent deputies to treat with the enemy, offering to ſubmit, on condition that diſgraceful terms ſhould not be impoſed; but otherwiſe declaring that the Roman people deſired only to be led to action. This abſurd gaſconade was laughed at by Alaric, who in his turn demanded all the wealth of Rome. *What will you leave then to the inhabitants?* ſaid the deputies. *Their lives*, replied the other, fiercely. They agreed that Rome ſhould pay him five thouſand pounds weight of gold, thirty thouſand of ſilver, and the children of the principal citizens ſhould be delivered as hoſtages. Theſe terms being ratified by the emperour, he retired.

He reduces Rome to extremity, and dictates the terms of peace.

The king of the Goths was not a barbarian but in name. Some of his ſoldiers having ſeized a convoy of proviſions, he puniſhed them ſeverely, and made them reſtore

Singular anecdote of this great man.

reſtore it; an act of juſtice perhaps more humiliating to the Romans than his victory. We ſhall meet with an inſtance of their treacherous behaviour to him, for which they ſuffered the puniſhment they deſerved.

409. Britain abandoned.

The name of Conſtantine, which appeared fortunate at the time the troops in Britain choſe the ſoldier we mentioned to be emperour, was but a ſlender obſtruction to the progreſs of theſe people, who ſubſiſted by plunder, and had overſpread all the country of Gaul. It was found neceſſary to relinquiſh Britain, which had always been laid waſte by the Picts and the Scots; and notice was ſent to the Britons to defend themſelves, who by this means recovered their liberty while they loſt a neceſſary protection. The Armoricans, who poſſeſſed the coaſts lying between the Seine and the Loire, likewiſe wanting to be free, drove out the Romans, and inſtituted a republican government for themſelves; but theſe loſſes did not equal that of Spain, which very ſoon followed.

The Armoricans ſhake off the yoke.

Spain conquered by the barbarians.

Conſtans, the ſon of Conſtantine the uſurper, was at that time at war with Gerontius, his beſt general; and thus the rage of civil diſcord was added to ſo many dreadful calamities. The Alans, the Suevi, and the Vandals, taking advantage of the diſſenſions among the Romans, paſſed the Pyrenees, and deſolated all Spain with fire and ſword. The human imagination cannot conceive the horrours which that country experienced for a whole year. Plague and famine were added to theſe dreadful maſſacres; men devoured one another. A mother roaſted and eat her four children, of which no other inſtance is to be found in hiſtory. The barbarians at laſt divided their conqueſt among them, and ſettled in the country.

Theſe conquerors civilized.

As ſoon as they got quiet poſſeſſion, they began to be humanized. They cultivated the lands; behaved with mildneſs to the inhabitants, providing ſuch as choſe to leave the country with neceſſary aſſiſtance, and upon all occaſions preſerving their promiſes inviolable. Their reputation for juſtice brought back great numbers of

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the people who had fled from this fertile country, where they had been formerly oppreſſed by deſpotiſm. Spain became almoſt happy under theſe new maſters, who were looked upon at firſt as ſavage monſters. They were all confounded under the name of Vandals, which name was ſometimes given even to the Saracens. As Gerontius had promoted their enterpriſe, they left the Romans the country lying on this ſide the Ebro, which is called New Caſtile, from Toledo, and the kingdoms of Arragon and Valencia, as far as the Ancient Saguntum.

They left ſome provinces to the Romans.

CHAP. III.

Alaric at Rome, &c.—End of the Reign of Arcadius.

HONORIUS was ſuch a weak prince, that neither the loſs of extenſive provinces, nor ſeeing himſelf threatened with total deſtruction, could render him either more diſcerning or more prudent. Alaric was waiting in his camp in Tuſcany for the performance of the articles of the treaty which was concluded with him for the preſervation of Rome: but the court preſumed to violate their promiſe. Olympius only thought of preſerving his own power, by ruining all whom he either hated or ſuſpected; and this unworthy miniſter was ruined in his turn by an intrigue of eunuchs. His ſucceſſor Jovius was a mere buſy body, a traitor void of underſtanding, who began a treaty with Alaric, in which he miſcarried from ignorance, and, for fear of being ſuſpected of treachery, ſwore by the life of the emperour, and made all his officers, and even the emperour himſelf, take an oath that they would never agree to an accommodation with the Goths. Some equitable propoſals, which were made by Alaric, were rejected, from a ridiculous pretence that if they had ſworn by the name of God they might hope that he would forgive the perjury; but having ſworn by the life of the prince, to violate that oath would be to expoſe the life of

409. The treaty with Alaric violated.

Olympius ſupplanted by Jovius.

Ridiculous pretence for not coming to an accommodation with the Goths.

of the prince. When affairs of ſtate are decided by ſuch motives, the ſtate deſerves deſtruction, ſince it is governed by folly.

Alaric makes Attalus emperour, and afterwards depoſes him.

Alaric very ſoon preſented himſelf at the gates of Rome, and compelled the Romans to forſake Honorius, giving them Attalus, the prefect of the city, for emperour, a man from whom he had nothing to dread. Attalus, who was equally weak and preſumptuous, being accompanied by the king of the Goths, approached to Ravenna, when Honorius, in terrour, made him an offer of ſharing the empire with him, to which he replied, he would have the whole; but afterward committed ſuch groſs blunders, that Alaric loſt patience, and, depoſing him, renewed the negotiation with Honorius. The imprudence of Attalus prevented the conqueſt of Africa. No corn having been received at Rome from that province, the famine was ſo dreadful, that the people in a tranſport of rage exclaimed during the games in the circus—*Let human fleſh be expoſed to ſale, and the price ſettled.*

410. He takes Rome, after having met with another proof of treachery.

This unfortunate city thought herſelf out of danger, when a new piece of treachery brought upon her ſtill greater miſeries. Honorius, who was leſs ſcrupulous about his oath, at laſt began to treat with Alaric; but Sarus, a Gothic captain, who was an enemy of the king, and attached to the emperour, broke off the negotiation by attacking the Goths, while the conferences were open, and killed a great number. Alaric, in a rage, laid ſiege to Rome for the third time, and, having carried it, gave it up to be pillaged; but his generous mind, which always was averſe from coming to this extremity, made him give orders to his ſoldiers to be ſparing of blood, to reſpect the honour of the women, and not to burn the edifices dedicated to religion. Two very large churches were marked out as inviolable aſylums.

His humanity.

Misfortunes of the city.

In ſuch circumſtances it was impoſſible to reſtrain the rage of the ſoldiery; ſtreets and houſes were deluged with blood, and the flames made moſt dreadful devaſtation;

tion; but churches and public buildings were ſpared, and the lives of many Romans ſaved by Alaric; no perſon that was known to be a ſenator loſt his life. We are aſſured by cotemporaries, that the city ſuffered infinitely more at the irruption of the Gauls, during the ancient civil wars, and even by the fire in the time of Nero. Though ſuch a heavy loſs could not be repaired, yet the city was very ſoon repeopled; diſmal monuments of deſtruction and maſſacre were viſible through its whole extent, which comprehended a ſpace of twenty one miles.

St Auguſtine and others aſcribe theſe calamities to divine vengeance yet it is of conſequence to examine the natural cauſes;

To refute the Pagans, whoſe unjuſt prejudices aſcribed theſe misfortunes to Chriſtianity, St. Auguſtine wrote his book *of the city of God*, and his diſciple Oroſius compoſed an univerſal hiſtory: both of them repreſented theſe human calamities as puniſhments for the wickedneſs of the people; and Salvianus, who was more eloquent, purſued the ſame path: though their idea may be pious, and the impreſſion it might make upon the minds of men uſeful, yet, ſince we frequently ſee vice proſperous in this world, and the virtuous become the victims of the wicked, and ſince divince juſtice is exerciſed in another life, it is of the greateſt conſequence to us to examine the moral and phyſical cauſes of natural events. The working of the firſt cauſe is to us inviſible; but that of ſecond cauſes is within reach of our inquiries, and it is by attending to them that we acquire ſkill and prudence. Rome will ever remain an important object for our conſideration, in which we may ſee the neceſſary influence of vice, of the paſſions, errours, a bad form of government, and exceſſive grandeur; in a word, whatever can contribute to the unhappineſs of individuals or the ruin of empires.

Roman behaviour at Carthage.

Great numbers of the citizens that fled from Rome retired to Carthage, where their firſt care was to run to the theatre, to take a ſide in the conteſts of the ſpectators, and to ſignalize themſelves by their levity and turbulence. As this was the diſpoſition of the Romans at that time, we cannot be ſurpriſed at their weakneſs or their misfortunes. Undoubtedly,

Death of Alaric.

Undoubtedly, if Alaric had pleaſed he might have taken Ravenna, and reigned in Italy; but it is ſuppoſed that he preferred Africa, where a ſingle victory might have ſecured him the poſſeſſion; and he prepared firſt to pillage Sicily. A part of his army was embarked, when his fleet was deſtroyed in his ſight by a dreadful ſtorm. Afflicted at this diſaſter, he was deliberating about the means of repairing it, when he died at Coſentia, leaving for his ſucceſſor Ataulfus, his brother in law and the companion of his actions.

The manner of burying among the Goths.

The Goths had a very extraordinary cuſtom, probably founded in ſuperſtition; they concealed the burying place of their great men, which is ornamented by other people with magnificent monuments. They turned the courſe of a ſmall river, and dug a grave in its bed, where they depoſited the body of Alaric, with ſome rich ſpoils: after which they returned the water to its proper channel, and murdered the priſoners by whom the work was executed.

Several ambitious people aſſumed the purple in Gaul, and were put to death.

A multitude of events ſucceeded rapidly about this period, attended with no circumſtances worthy our notice. Gerontius, who was ſettled in Spain, came to attack Conſtantine in Gaul; and, ſurpriſing Conſtans, the ſon of that uſurper, at Vienne, cut off his head, and beſieged the father in Arles: but Conſtantius, the only general that Honorius had in his ſervice who was not choſen from among the barbarians, put to flight Gerontius, who laid violent hands upon himſelf. Maximus, whom he had decorated with the purple, was put to death ſoon after. Conſtantius ſtormed the city of Arles, and Conſtantine took refuge in a church, where he was ordained a prieſt: his life was promiſed to him on oath, in the name of Honorius; but that emperour diſavowing it, both he and his ſon were put to death. Jovinus, a Gaul of illuſtrous birth, who next aſſumed the purple, was likewiſe beheaded. Heraclian tried his fortune the ſame way; but, being defeated, underwent the ſame puniſhment. Theſe tragical examples neither ſerved to put a ſtop to the views of ambition, nor to ſecure the throne.

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Ataulfus marries Placidia.

The generous Ataulfus, the worthy ſucceſſor of Alaric, a friend to peace, wanted nothing but a ſettlement in the empire, and the hand of Placidia, the ſiſter of Honorius, who had been the captive of Alaric. Having entered into treaty with that prince, and being deceived, according to cuſtom he laid waſte the country of Gaul. He took Narbonne and Toulouſe; and, by his agreeable manners, having obtained the conſent of the princeſs, he married her. Upon condition that he was to have no ſhips, nor carry on commerce with foreigners, an eſtabliſhment was granted him in Spain, on this ſide the Ebro. He was ſatisfied with a lot which he could improve by arms; and was ſcarce confirmed, when he was aſſaſſinated by one of his equerries, and died, recommending to his brother to reſtore Placidia to the emperour, and to preſerve peace between the two nations. About the ſame time, Honorious yielded to the Burgundians a part of their conqueſts in Gaul.

Honorius grants him a ſettlement in Spain.

Judgment of a count againſt the Donatiſts.

During theſe revolutions, the Donatiſts, who were always obſtinate and impetuous, filled Africa with diſſenſions. The emperour publiſhed new edicts againſt them, and declared whoever attempted to change the faith, guilty of a capital offence. The Catholic biſhops having propoſed a conference, as a means of conciliation, he gave orders for the count Marcellinus to preſide at the meeting; and, after hearing both parties, to pronounce a definitive ſentence. Marcellinus pronounced in favour of the Catholics, declaring the Donatiſts authors of ſchiſm, and ſubjected them to the puniſhments preſcribed by the laws: but their outrages were only by this means increaſed.

The clerks exempted from ſecular tribunals.

On occaſion of an inſurrection of the people of Arles againſt the biſhop, Honorius declared, by a celebrated law, that no clerk could be accuſed except before a biſhop, and that the accuſers ſhould be held infamous if they did not prove their charge. We ſhall ſee great abuſes ariſe from theſe immunities: the evil might have been prevented by proper reſtrictions; but nothing was foreſeen,

foreſeen, and civil order and ſovereign authority together fell to ruin.

In the Eaſt St. Chryſoſtom baniſhed.

The affairs in the Eaſt, which we have left for ſome time unnoticed, on purpoſe to avoid confuſion, preſent nothing to this period but melancholy objects either for church or ſtate. St. John Chryſoſtom, biſhop of Conſtantinople, the moſt eloquent, and one of the moſt virtuous men of the age, having been twice baniſhed, occaſioned a ſedition in that city. This holy prelate wanted to reform the morals of the clergy, the monks, the people, and the court: by which means he raiſed a number of enemies of all the different orders. The empreſs Eudoxia, an imperious and revengeful woman, ruled the weak Arcadius. Chryſoſtom was accuſed of having pointed her out in one of his ſermons by the name of Jezebel; and Eudoxia cauſing him to be condemned by an aſſembly of biſhops, who were at her devotion, he was baniſhed by the emperour; but the outcries of the people occaſioned his being recalled, when his zeal became more animated than ever. He complained of the games and dances, with which the dedication of a ſtatue of Eudoxia had been celebrated, which had indecently interrupted divine worſhip, and the empreſs was much offended with him; but forgetting her imperial dignity, and thinking only of the abuſe which had been committed, he began one of his ſermons with the following words—*Behold Herodias again in a rage; behold ſhe dances; again ſhe requires the head of John.* A ſecond baniſhment very ſoon followed. Chryſoſtom continued three years, and died in 407. Eudoxia died in 404, and Arcadius in 408, leaving the empire to his ſon, Theodoſius the Younger, who was only ſeven years of age.

The ſaint rails againſt the empreſs Eudoxia.

Death of Arcadius.

Sentences to be pronounced in Latin or in Greek.

He abrogated an ancient law, by which the judges were obliged to pronounce their ſentences in Latin, a language unknown in the greateſt part of the Eaſt; and gave leave to pronounce them either in Greek or Latin. The Greek ought to have been preferred, as it was the language of the country.

THEODOSIUS

THEODOSIUS II. *in the East*; HONORIUS *in the West*.

UNDER an infant emperour, every thing was to be dreaded; foreign enemies, civil diſſenſions, and the intrigues of the court. But Anthemius, captain of the guards, who aſſumed the reins of government under Theodoſius the younger, poſſeſſed all the qualities of an able and ſpirited miniſter. If he found it impoſſible to put an end to the intrigues of the eunuchs by whom the prince was beſet, at leaſt he checked a number of abuſes. He kept the enemies of the empire within bounds. Iſdegerd, king of Perſia, declared himſelf the protector of Theodoſius. (By an abſurd fable, he is ſuppoſed the young emperour's guardian.) Ulides, king of the Huns, made incurſions into Thrace, and inſiſted upon what tribute he pleaſed, as the price of withdrawing his troops; but he was attacked, and diſappeared. Tranquillity was at laſt reſtored in Cyrenaica, a country of Lybia, which had been a prey to the ravages of the barbarous Auſturians, and ſtill more to the oppreſſions of rapacious governours, placed and protected by the eunuchs.

402. Anthemius, a wiſe miniſter of Theodoſius the younger.

Anthemius rebuilt the walls of Conſtantinople, whoſe compaſs was now too ſmall for the inhabitants. While he enforced the laws againſt heretics, he endeavoured to prevent them from ſerving as a cloak to abuſe. In caſe of failure of natural heirs, the poſſeſſions of heretics eſcheated to the treaſury; and he prohibited the Catholics from turning the confiſcation to their own advantage, even in virtue of a donation from the emperour, which was to be held as ſurreptitiouſly obtained. The reaſon of this law was, that the ſpoils of the heretics excited the avidity of their adverſaries, and doubtleſs multiplied accuſations.

Law concerning the confiſcation of the goods of heretics

From the time that Pulcheria appeared at the head of affairs, we hear no more of Anthemius. This princeſs, who was declared Auguſta when only fifteen years of

414. Pulcheria governs.

of age, took upon herſelf the weight of the government, and managed it with as much prudence as if ſhe had had long experience. She turned her principal attention on the education of her brother; and, after removing his preceptor, Antiochus, an eunuch of intriguing ſpirit and rapacious temper, endeavoured to inſpire the young prince with piety, virtue, the love of buſineſs, and every ſentiment worthy of a ſovereign.

Theodoſius profits little by his education.

But the underſtanding of Theodoſius was weak, his ſoul groveling, and incapable of any thing great. He was only a ſpiritleſs devotee, and a bad theologiſt. His palace was converted into a kind of monaſtery, where he and his ſiſter chaunted the office from the dawn of day. Perhaps Pulcheria herſelf was not enough ſenſible that on the throne piety ought to be leſs ſubjected to obſervances, leſs laborious, than in the cloiſter; that it ought to be exemplary to the ſubjects, without taking up the time deſtined for the buſineſs of the public, and degrading majeſty by a miſtaken devotion.

He trembles at being excommunicated by a monk.

The following anecdote proves evidently that he had more ſuperſtition than religion. A monk, provoked at the emperour's refuſing him ſome favour, cried out, as he quitted the preſence, *I excommunicate you*; and Theodoſius, trembling at this ridiculous anathema, proteſted that he would not taſte food till he had received abſolution. He conjured a biſhop to obtain that favour for him; and, notwithſtanding the prelate's remonſtrances, abſtained from all food till the inſolent monk had taken off his ſentence.

He blindly gives himſelf up to the eunuchs.

Pulcheria could never conquer the aſcendant which the lacqueys of the court had over her brother. Laws and ordinances were made by eunuchs, which he ſigned without reading, and maintained to his ſiſter that he read every one of them. In order to open his eyes, ſhe preſented to him a paper, by which he gave up his wife to ſlavery, and he ſigned it, according to cuſtom, without examination. In vain did Pulcheria give him this warning; it mortified, but did not correct, him. The reader may foretell that his reign, which laſted forty

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two years, will only be a long ſeries of blunders, without a ſingle glorious action.

Severe laws were eſtabliſhed in favour of Chriſtianity, by which the Pagans were prohibited from bearing any offices; thoſe who were diſcovered offering ſacrifices were condemned to baniſhment, with confiſcation of goods; and the temples and other places conſecrated to idolatry converted into churches, under pain of death to all who oppoſe it. 415. Laws in favour of Chriſtianity.

The idolaters in the Eaſt, being reduced to a ſmall body, were more eaſily overpowered than formerly. But the Chriſtians of Alexandria ſignalized themſelves by one of the moſt dreadful ſeditions that were ever raiſed in that turbulent city; and the Jews, who were very numerous there, formed a party againſt them. The quarrel which was originally raiſed on account of a dancer, the fondneſs for public diverſions often producing diſſenſions equally bloody and frivolous, was followed by a conſpiracy of the Jews. Sedition at Alexandria.

St. Cyril, biſhop of Alexandria, a prelate, whoſe ſanctity was joined with an impetuous temper, and who, with right intentions, poſſibly carried his zeal beyond proper bounds, attacked the ſynagogues, and drove out the Jews. Their goods were pillaged, and ſeveral perſons periſhed in the tumult. *(See the Hiſtory of the Lower Empire.)* The monks who reſided in the neighbouring mountains of Nitria, were a ſet of ſeditious men, who, under the biſhop Theophilus, predeceſſor and uncle of St. Cyril, had committed all kinds of violence; and a body of five hundred of them now came again to ſignalize themſelves. Oreſtes the governour, having quarrelled with Cyril, was inſulted by them in the ſtreets; and one of them even wounded him by a ſtroke of a ſtone. Ammonius (the monk, who had committed that outrage) was ſeized, dragged before the governour, and put to the torture, under which he expired; upon which Cyril pronounced his eulogium, and gave him the title of martyr; and the people, who but a moment before had defended Oreſtes againſt the monks, The Jews attacked, and driven out by St. Cyril. Five hundred monks come to his aſſiſtance.

monks, then joined the biſhop, either from fickleneſs or a principle of fanaticiſm.

The famous Hypatia torn in pieces by the Chriſtians

An execrable and atrocious crime gave additional horrours to the ſedition. Hypatia, daughter of the celebrated geometrician Theon, exceeded her father in learning, and gave public lectures in philoſophy with the greateſt applauſe; nor was ſhe leſs admirable for the purity of her virtue, joined to an uncommon beauty, and every accompliſhment that could adorn human nature. But this excellent woman, becauſe ſhe was a Pagan, truſted by the magiſtrates, and ſuſpected to be active againſt St. Cyril, became an object of deteſtation to that fanatical people. A ſet of deſperadoes, headed by a prieſt, ſeized her in the open ſtreet, hurried her into a church, where they ſtript her naked, tore her body with whips, cut her in pieces, and publicly burnt her mangled limbs in the market place.

This crime remains unpuniſhed.

Theodoſius, enraged at this act of barbarity, reſolved to puniſh it; but the criminals purchaſed the protection of the eunuchs, and eſcaped with impunity. An ineffectual law was publiſhed to reſtrain the licentiouſneſs of a ſet of prieſts in Alexandria, who were ſtyled *Parabolani*, that is, *men who braved dangers*; and this ſeems to have been the only meaſure that was taken to remedy the diſorder.

421. Theodoſius marries Athenais.

The emperour's marriage with the celebrated Athenais forms a ſtriking contraſt with the murder of Hypatia. Leontius, a ſophiſt of Athens, her father, had diſinherited her in favour of his other children, becauſe, ſaid he, whimſically, in his will, *ſhe might find ſufficient reſources in her merit, which was ſuperiour to her ſex.* Having repaired to Conſtantinople in order to procure herſelf juſtice, ſhe ſo charmed Pulcheria and Theodoſius, by her beauty, her wit, and her virtue, that the emperour married her. Being a Pagan, as her father had been, ſhe was baptized, and her name changed to that of Eudoxia. She cultivated letters during her whole life; and Phocius highly extols her poems on religious ſubjects. Soon after this marriage, a violent perſecution,

tion, which the Chriſtians ſuffered in Perſia, kindled a war between the two nations, who had been ſo long enemies. Abdas, a biſhop of that country, had burned a Perſian temple, and refuſed to rebuild it; notwithſtanding the king's order, who granted to the Chriſtians the free exerciſe of their religion. This extravagant action cauſed the toleration to be revoked; the churches were demoliſhed, and the hands of the executioners armed againſt the faithful. Great numbers of them, having fled for protection into the Roman territories, were reclaimed by the ſon of Iſdegerd, Varanes V. who, upon the refuſal of Theodoſius, detained ſome ſubjects of the empire. The war then commenced; and, after ſome campaigns, in which the Romans had the advantage, the Perſians ſued for peace. A treaty was accordingly concluded (422.) for a hundred years; but the toleration, of the revocation of which Abdas had been the cauſe, was but imperfectly reſtored. *(See Theodoret.)*

A perſecution and war kindled in Perſia by the imprudent zeal of Abdas.

More intereſting affairs call our attention to the Weſt, where the barbarians ſucceſsfully continued their enterpriſes. Ataulfus was ſucceeded by Sigeric, his declared enemy, who maſſacred his children, and reigned only ſeven days, his ſubjects haſtening to extinguiſh tyranny in its birth, by the murder of the tyrant. Wallia, whom the Viſigoths elected in his ſtead, a man equally politic and brave, made a treaty with the general Conſtantius, by which he engaged to reſtore Placidia, and to ſerve the emperour in his wars, on condition of receiving ſix hundred thouſand meaſures of wheat. In fact, he defeated the Vandals and Alans, and either as a recompenſe for his ſervices, or from a dread that he would keep his conqueſts, the Romans granted him, in exchange for his poſſeſſions on the other ſide of the Pyrenees, an eſtabliſhment much more worthy of his ambition, ceding to him Aquitania Secunda, and Novem Populania (at preſent Poitou, Saintonge, Perigord, Bordelois, Agenois, Angoumois, and Gaſcony) beſides the city of Toulouſe, which he made his capital. That

418. Eſtabliſhment of the Viſigoths in Gaul.

Ceſſion made to Wallia.

country was named Gothia, and the Goths held it fourſcore and eight years, till the invaſion of Clovis.

420. Eſtabliſhment of the Francs.

According to the generality of authors, the Francs ſettled two years afterwards, under their king Pharamond, in the country ſituated between Maeſtricht and the confluence of the Maes and Waal. But the exiſtence of this prince is problematical. Better critics aſcribe the foundation of the French monarchy to Clodion, in 438. But Clovis ought to be looked upon as its real founder,* for prior to his times we meet with ſcarce any thing but fables. Let us content ourſelves with obſerving here, that from the time of Gordian, the Francs had made frequent incurſions into Gaul; and that, according to the moſt probable opinion, they were a collection of ſeveral confederate German tribes between the Rhine, the Mein, and the Weſer, who united in defence of their liberty againſt the Romans, the name of *Franc* in their language ſignifying *free*. The moſt diſtinguiſhed among them were the Sicambri.

421. Conſtantius marries Placidia, is promoted to the empire, and dies.

Conſtantius, after having done the empire good ſervice againſt the barbarians, at laſt married Placidia, ſiſter of the emperour, and widow of Ataulfus. He had managed all the affairs of the empire for ten years, and, as well as his wife, being ambitious of the imperial dignity, it was conferred upon them by Honorius, who had no children. But Conſtantius died the ſame year; and Placidia, upon account of a quarrel with her brother, being ordered to quit Ravenna, retired to Theodoſius the younger.

423. Death of Honorius.

The death of Honorius, which happened in 423, would have been a bleſſing to the empire, had it been poſſible to repair the misfortunes of his reign. That prince, whoſe weakneſs, rather than inclination, made him almoſt a tyrant, committed every act of injuſtice that he was put upon.

What we are to think of the laws of Arcadius and Honorius.

If we were to judge by the numerous laws of Arcadius and Honorius (they were commonly publiſhed in the name

* I begin modern hiſtory with the eſtabliſhment of the French monarchy by Clovis; but we muſt here continue the Roman hiſtory, in order to avoid confuſion.

name of both emperours) it would be believed at firſt that the government was watchful for the happineſs of the ſubjects. We find in them excellent ſentiments, and good principles: but at bottom theſe were mere words. The public miſeries were increaſed by ſome laws in their nature faulty; and the beſt were not put in execution. It was inceſſantly neceſſary to make alterations, additions, or repeals; and legiſlation, which ought to be ſimple and unequivocal, was converted into a chaos of darkneſs and uncertainty.

The inhuman ſhews of gladiators were ſtill kept up, notwithſtanding a law of Conſtantine prohibiting them; but they were aboliſhed by Honorius in 403, becauſe an Anchoret, named Telemachus, who had come from the Eaſt on purpoſe to attempt a reformation of that abuſe, having thrown himſelf into the middle of the combatants in the arena, in order to part them, was ſtoned to death by the ſpectators. Shews of the gladiators aboliſhed.

Hiſtorians aſſure us, that before Rome was taken by Alaric, there were ſeveral families whoſe yearly income amounted to more than 200,000l. and the families of the ſecond rank commonly had, at leaſt, about 50,000l. a year. From hence it is eaſy to conclude, that this city abſorbed all the wealth of the empire; that the extreme opulence of ſome produced extreme poverty in the others; and that the lower orders of the people were oppreſſed in order to fill the coffers of thoſe inſatiable men who never have enough to ſupply their pleaſures; in a word, that riches and indigence equally contributed to extinguiſh their courage, to eradicate their virtue, and deſtroy every principle of love for their country. The provinces groaned under an inſupportable and tyrannical yoke: the laws always ſpoke a deſire of relieving them; but the government conſtantly acted in contradiction to the laws. We muſt not therefore be aſtoniſhed that the barbarians deſtroyed the empire. Riches concentrated in Rome. The provinces ruined.

THEODOSIUS II. *in the Eaſt, and* VALENTINIAN III. *in the Weſt.*

CHAP. I.

Valentinian aſſociated in the Empire.—Laws of Theodoſius II.—Genſeric formidable in Africa.

423. Theodoſius the Younger aſſociates Valentinian III. in the empire.

THEODOSIUS, not having acknowledged the title of Conſtantius and Placidia, at firſt entertained thoughts of reuniting the two empires in his own perſon. But John, ſecretary of ſtate to Honorius, having aſſumed the purple, granted liberty to the ſlaves in order to form them into an army, and ſent the celebrated general, Aetius, to ſolicit aſſiſtance from the Huns: the emperour found himſelf under a neceſſity of ſharing it, and therefore granted to Valentinian, the ſon of Conſtantius, a boy of five years of age, the title of *Moſt Noble*, which had been ſubſtituted inſtead of that of *Cæſar*, and beſtowed on his mother Placidia, that of *Auguſta*; after which he ſent them into the Weſt at the head of an army. John was taken and beheaded, after a reign of two years; and Valentinian III. was proclaimed emperour, who, on his marriage with the daughter of Theodoſius, ceded the weſtern Illyria to his father in law.

Theodoſius acknowledges himſelf ſubject to the laws.

One of his firſt laws contains a maxim highly worthy of a monarch: *The ſovereign majeſty*, ſays he, *does itſelf honour by acknowledging its ſubjection to the laws. The power of the laws is the foundation of ours, and there is more honour in obeying them, than in commanding alone without them.* "This," ſays Mr. le Beau, "is the ſublimeſt leſſon that a ſovereign ever gave to his equals."

Two laws of Theodoſius, one bad, the other good.

About the ſame time we find a law of Theodoſius II. which does not ſhew near ſo great a degree of wiſdom. It prohibits as treaſonable, not only the wearing of ſtuffs dyed of the colour of the imperial ornaments, but even keeping them in the houſe. This is a regulation in the true ſpirit of deſpotiſm. By another law, as prudent as

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the former is abſurd, he fixed the period of thirty years undiſturbed poſſeſſion as ſufficient to give real property. Nothing is more common under the laſt reigns than a mixture of good and bad laws, which are a certain proof of a capricious government, ſhifting with every wind of opinion, and deſtitute of any fixed plan.

Prefcription of thirty years.

Among many unconnected and confuſed facts, let us chooſe the moſt important; and, without entering into minute details, bring thoſe that have an analogy to each other into one view. In the Weſt were two great generals whoſe rivalſhip became deſtructive to the ſtate: Aetius was the terrour of the barbarians; but being jealous of Boniface, count of Africa, he endeavoured to ruin him by repreſenting him at court as a rebel. The count, undeſervedly condemned, invited the Vandals out of Spain into Africa, where, under the conduct of their king Genſeric, they laid waſte the country with fire and ſword. This general, being reinſtated in his employments, attempted to prevail on the barbarians to retire, and on their refuſal took arms againſt them, but was beaten. Except Cirtha and Carthage, the Romans retained no poſſeſſions in Africa, which the Vandals with impunity made the ſcene of their cruelty.

Rivalſhip of Aetius and Boniface.

The Vandals take advantage of it, and make themſelves maſters of Africa.

Boniface enjoyed the favour of Placidia, who was arbitreſs of the government, and beheld Aetius with an evil eye; however, this general prevented the effects of their hatred, by raiſing the ſtandard of revolt; and, though defeated by his rival, gave him in the battle a wound of which he died in a ſhort time. Meaſures being taken to arreſt him, he took the road to Pannonia, in order to implore the aſſiſtance of the Huns; upon which, the court being ſtruck with a panic, Placidia recalled him, and reſtored him to all his dignities, with the addition of that of patrician. Such is the puniſhment of revolt in a tottering, ill governed ſtate. Gaul, which was expoſed a prey to the avarice of the magiſtrates, as well as to the arms of the barbarians, ſuffered inceſſantly new misfortunes. The peaſants, under the name of Bagaudæ, roſe in arms, and ravaged the country

431. Revolt of Aetius.

Death of Boniface.

Progreſs of the barbarians.

try with all the fury of wild beaſts. The Viſigoths broke the treaty concluded with the Romans, and laid ſiege to Narbonne, which was ſucceſsfully defended by the auxiliary Huns. Clodion, king of the Francs, ſeized upon Cambray, Tournay, and Amiens, in 438, which were ceded to him, becauſe he could not be driven out. Treves was a fourth time plundered by the Francs, who likewiſe made themſelves maſters of Cologne. Genſeric remained in peaceable poſſeſſion of the beſt part of Africa, where he diſplayed the moſt fervent zeal for Arianiſm. The Suevi ſubdued Bœtica and the other countries of Spain, which were abandoned by the Vandals. In a word, nothing was to be ſeen in every quarter but maſſacres, revolutions, and diſmemberments of the empire, the particulars of which would tire without inſtructing the reader.

The Francs eſtabliſh themſelves in Gaul under their king Clodion in 438.

In the Eaſt new theological quarrels were fomented by Theodoſius. Neſtorius, biſhop of Conſtantinople, taught that there were two perſons, as well as two natures, in Jeſus Chriſt; and that Mary was not the mother of God, but the mother of Chriſt. The prelate, who had formerly perſecuted the heretics, ſoon drew upon himſelf, by this ſubtil hereſy, a ſtorm which overwhelmed him. Though Pulcheria was againſt him, he was favoured by the emperour. The general council of Epheſus was aſſembled to decide the queſtion (431.) at which St. Cyril of Alexandria preſided; and the hereſiarch was condemned and depoſed at the firſt meeting. Cyril and the biſhop of Epheſus were in their turn depoſed in a packed aſſembly, held by John of Antioch, which the biſhops had refuſed to attend. Men's minds were more and more inflamed: at laſt Theodoſius approved the judgment of the council, and Neſtorius was baniſhed; but Neſtorianiſm was not deſtroyed. It ſtill ſubſiſts in ſeveral countries of the Eaſt.

Neſtorius diſturbs the Faſt by his hereſy.

Council of Epheſus.

In 435, the emperour ordered the books of the Neſtorians to be publicly burnt, and prohibited, under pain of confiſcation of goods, the granting to theſe innova-

435. Uſeleſs ſeverities againſt the Neſtorians.

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tors any place for holding an aſſembly; and, in caſes of obſtinacy afterwards, added the puniſhment of death. The biſhops and clerks, infected with that errour, were driven from their churches, and the laymen anathematized. It was not remembered that the progreſs of Arianiſm had been increaſed by ſuch rigorous meaſures. Experience proved, and it is now univerſally agreed, that the church would have been better ſerved with more moderation.

Law for enriching the churches.

The devotion of Theodoſius dictated to him a law by which the poſſeſſions of eccleſiaſtics and monks, who died without heirs, were beſtowed upon the churches or monaſteries: before that time they had eſcheated to the treaſury. We may obſerve, that the monks long after this retained the uſe and property of their goods.

438, Theodoſian code.

Though few men were leſs capable than Theodoſius II. of ſupporting the part of a legiſlator, yet he put in execution a plan of legiſlation which deſerves our attention a few moments. Juriſprudence was embarraſſed and diſgraced by numberleſs laws, among which were found many contradictory or abſurd. He therefore cauſed a code to be compoſed, containing only the laws of the Chriſtian emperours, edicts, reſcripts, ordinances, acts, and decrees of the council, &c. and when he publiſhed it, declared that the empire ſhould be bound only by theſe ſtatutes. Valentinian III. eſtabliſhed this code in the Weſt, and the laws afterwards added to it were called *Novellæ*.

Remarks on this code.

The critics have remarked great imperfections in that collection; a great number of mutilated, obſcure, ill choſen, ill arranged laws, and ſome bearing marks of ſuperſtition. However, ſo far as it goes, they judge it preferable to that which Juſtinian ſubſtituted in its room. It is remarkable that the Theodoſian code ſubſiſted only fourſcore and ten years in the Eaſt; whereas in the Weſt it continued after the deſtruction of the empire. It was adopted by the Viſigoths, but in the ages of ignorance fell into deſuetude. In the ſixteenth century it was revived, and Jacques Godefroy, a lawyer of Paris, enriched

enriched it with a commentary which is greatly eſteemed.

Abrogation of a law for the increaſe of the city of Conſtantinople.

The emperour, ſoon after the publication of his code, abrogated a pernicious law of Conſtantine, which prohibited the landholders of Aſia to diſpoſe of their eſtates even by will, unleſs they had a houſe in Conſtantinople. The capitals increaſe but too much without taking ſuch odious methods.

Law of Theodoſius in favour of divorces.

It is amazing that a devout prince ſhould facilitate divorces, which Conſtantine and Honorius had rendered more difficult than formerly. Yet he aboliſhed their laws on that ſubject as too ſevere, reſtoring the authority of the ancient Roman ſtatutes and the deciſions of the ancient lawyers. We ſhall ſee the cuſtom of divorces continue a long time after this.

That prince grows jealous of Paulinus, and puts him to death.

When Theodoſius made this laſt law, he was probably tainted with the paſſion of jealouſy, of which his wife ſoon felt the effects. From his infancy, a friendſhip had ſubſiſted between him and Paulinus, one of the principal lords of the court. The empreſs Eudoxia (Athenais) likewiſe entertained the greateſt eſteem and gratitude for that nobleman, who had contributed to her riſe; was fond of his company, made him her confidant, and profited by his advice; but their innocent correſpondence appeared a crime in the eyes of the emperour. Paulinus was put to death by his orders; and Eudoxia, thinking herſelf diſhonoured, obtained leave to retire to Jeruſalem. Having taken with her a prieſt and a deacon, theſe men again awakened the ſuſpicions of her huſband; and count Saturninus, to whom his cruel revenge was intruſted, put them to an ignominious death without form of trial.

Eudoxia, or Athenais, retires.

The empreſs, no longer able to reſtrain her rage, cauſed Saturninus to be aſſaſſinated; upon which ſhe was deprived of her attendants; and, being reduced to the rank of a private perſon, dedicated the remainder of her life to works of piety. Cyrus, a native of Egypt, a man of learning, and a good poet, who had riſen by her favour to the rank of patrician, was ſome time after deprived

prived of all his poſſeſſions, becauſe the vanity of Theodoſius was hurt by the acclamations of the people in his praiſe. The eunuch Chryſaphus now acquired an uncontrouled influence over the mind of the prince, and abſolute dominion in the government. Even Pulcheria no longer retained any credit with her brother. That legiſlator ſhewed himſelf an object of hatred and contempt; and every thing was tranſacted according to the dictates of paſſion.

The eunuch Chryſaphus abſolute maſter.

In the mean time, the barbarians were every day gaining ground. Carthage was taken by Genſeric; and, though when he undertook his African expedition, he was not maſter of a ſingle ſhip, and his Vandals were utterly unacquainted with navigation, by a prodigious effort of genius he created a formidable naval power, with which he had already carried terrour and deſolation into Sicily. The eunuch Chryſaphus, fancying that he could vanquiſh him and recover his conqueſts, exhauſted the empire in equipping a fleet of eleven hundred ſail. But Genſeric artfully drew him into a tedious negotiation, in the courſe of which, the Roman army being weakened, and Theodoſius being obliged to employ his forces againſt the Huns, the Vandal found himſelf in a condition to preſcribe what terms he pleaſed. Accordingly he was acknowledged ſovereign of Africa; and the only fruit of this vaſt armament was, that the barbarians poured on every ſide into the dominions of the Romans, while they were loſing time and waſting their ſtrength in a fruitleſs enterpriſe.

441. Genſeric eſtabliſhes a formidable naval power in Africa.

Fruitleſs enterpriſe againſt him.

CHAP. II.

Conqueſts of the Huns under Attila.—End of the Reign of Theodoſius the Younger.

THE moſt dreadful of the barbarians were the Huns, at that time governed by Bleda and Attila, two brothers, equal in authority, and rivals in valour.

Ravages of the Huns.

About

Tribute paid to them.

About ſix or ſeven years before, they had obliged Theodoſius to make a diſgraceful treaty, by which he bound himſelf to reſtore the deſerters, to pay every year a tribute of ſeven hundred pounds weight of gold (the double of the ancient tribute) and not to aſſiſt the enemies of the Huns. After this treaty, the two kings had carried their arms into Tartary, and overrun the country as far as the borders of China; by which expedition, in a ſevere climate, the ferocity of their troops was ſtill augmented. On their return to Europe, more haughty and enterpriſing than ever, and filled with contempt for the Romans, whom they looked upon as cowards, they broke the treaty on ſome frivolous pretence, croſſed the Danube, laid waſte Upper Mæſia, and penetrated to Naiſſa; after which they invaded Thrace, marking their way with piles of ruin and mountains of ſlain. A new treaty was concluded, but it only procured a ſuſpenſion of arms for a few years.

Vaſt conqueſts of their king Attila.

Attila's genius equalled his ambition; an artful politician and prudent general, notwithſtanding his ardent courage, he had formed the moſt boundleſs plans of conqueſt; had murdered his brother Bleda, that he might enjoy undivided dominion; and ſubjected to his power an immenſe extent of country, from the Baltic on one ſide, to the eaſtern ocean on the other. He had received ambaſſadours from China; hemmed in the Roman empire, and threatened to deſtroy it. Though

He takes advantage of the ſuperſtition of his ſoldiers.

deſtitute of every principle of religion, he knew how to turn the vulgar ſuperſtition to his own advantage, and pretended to have been miraculouſly put in poſſeſſion of a ſword formerly adored by the Scythians as the ſymbol of their deity: the people believed his enterpriſes inſpired by the god of battles, and this opinion heightened the courage and ferocity of his ſoldiers

He is named general of the Romans.

Theodoſius having conferred upon him the title of general of the Romans, he accepted it, but at the ſame time declared that he ſtill reſerved the liberty of carrying on war againſt them, if they did not act in a manner agreeable to him; and that kings, ſuperiour not only to the

generals

generals of the empire, but to the emperours themſelves, were in the number of his ſlaves.

Soon after, Illyria, Thrace, Dacia, and Mæſia, ſuffered new ravages. Threeſcore and ten cities were ſtormed by the Huns, and they defeated two armies. Peace was afterwards purchaſed of them at the price of ſix thouſand pounds weight of gold, and an annual tribute of a third of that ſum. Money could not be collected but by oppreſſion and violence. The tax gatherers in ſome reſpects were worſe than the barbarians. Opulent families fell into indigence, and numbers ſtrangled themſelves in deſpair, or famiſhed themſelves to death.

447. He overpowers them, and obliges them to purchaſe a peace.

The more the emperour dreaded and courted Attila, the more deſpicable he rendered himſelf. The ambaſſadours of the Hun were loaded with preſents, and if he had a mind to enrich any of his officers, he needed only ſend them to Conſtantinople. His pretenſions increaſed in proportion to the proofs of cowardice given by the Romans; and a threatening of war was ſufficient to obtain for him whatever he demanded.

How much he deſpiſes them.

Treachery, which had been ſo often employed ſince honour and virtue had loſt their influence, at laſt appeared the ſole reſource againſt an invincible enemy. Theodoſius, by the advice of Chryſaphus, reſolved to procure his aſſaſſination. Immenſe treaſures were promiſed to Edeco, Attila's envoy, if he would undertake the execution of this black conſpiracy; to which he conſented in appearaance, and ſet out followed by an embaſſy, but on his return revealed the ſecret to his maſter. Attila diſſembled, received the ambaſſadours ſitting on a wooden throne, ſpoke to them with his ordinary firmneſs, but treated them kindly, and in the mean time took every proper method to procure irrefragable evidence of the treachery of the Romans.

449. Theodoſius attempts to get him aſſaſſinated.

Priſcus, who was an eye witneſs, has given an account of this embaſſy, with ſome particulars which will ſerve to ſhew the genius of this conqueror, and the character of his nation. The king gave an entertainment to his whole court, where the gueſts were ſerved

Deſcription of an entertainment given by Attila.

in

in gold and ſilver plate; but he uſed only wooden platters, and taſted only of a ſingle diſh. Two bards ſung his victories, whoſe ſtrains tranſported the youth with martial enthuſiaſm, while the old men ſhed tears for not being longer able to ſignalize themſelves in imitation of the hero. The entertainment was cloſed by the introduction of two buffoons; and amidſt the peals of laughter which they excited, the king ſtill preſerved his gravity; nor did he ſhew any pleaſure but in careſſing the youngeſt of his ſons, who was the peculiar object of his tenderneſs.

That hero treats the emperour with contempt.

As ſoon as he had procured clear evidence of the plot formed againſt his life, he ſent deputies to Conſtantinople with orders to deliver this meſſage to the emperour: —*That Attila and Theodoſius were of a race equally noble, but Theodoſius had degraded himſelf by becoming the ſlave of Attila, to whom he paid tribute; that he was only a vile perfidious ſlave, becauſe he traitorouſly attempted to murder his maſter; and Attila pardoned him only on condition of his delivering up his eunuch, that he might be puniſhed according to his deſerts.* Theſe thundering reproaches ſhew more greatneſs than victory itſelf. The haughty conqueror ſuffered himſelf to be appeaſed by ſubmiſſions and preſents, and the worthleſs eunuch preſerved his arbitrary power.

New troubles raiſed by the hereſy of Eutyches.

Such was the inſenſate paſſion of the Greeks for the ſubtilties and diſputes of theology, notwithſtanding the perils with which they were environed, that a new hereſy on the myſtery of the incarnation ſtarted up to throw the empire into freſh confuſion. Neſtorius, while he combated Arianiſm, had imagined that two natures in Jeſus Chriſt conſtituted two perſons. Eutyches, an enthuſiaſtic monk, while he vented his fury againſt Neſtorianiſm, concluded that unity of perſon ſuppoſed unity of nature, and that the humanity was abſorbed in the divinity.

Favoured by the emperour and his

The all powerful eunuch, and conſequently the emperour, declared in his favour. A council of a hundred and thirty biſhops, held at Epheſus, condemned the doctrine

doctrine of two natures in one perſon; but their votes were not free. Anathemas, depoſitions and baniſhments were the fruits of the ſophiſms of Eutyches; whoſe hereſy, though condemned in the council of Chalcedon held in 451, has ſtill numerous followers in the Eaſt, as well as that of Neſtorius. Till the ruin of the Greek empire, we ſhall ſee theological diſputes, varied under every form, produce inteſtine quarrels as fatal as the arms of the barbarians. eunuch Chryſaphus.

Theodoſius, on his return from a pilgrimage, died, after a reign of forty two years, without deſerving any other title than that of *Calligraphes*, becauſe he excelled in forming the letters of the alphabet. The walls of Conſtantinople, which in 447 were overthrown by a dreadful earthquake, were quickly rebuilt; but this is attributed to the ardour exerted by the *blue* and *green* factions, by which the people were divided in the games of the circus. In this whimſical nation every thing bears the ſtamp of frivolity and fanaticiſm. 450. Death of Theodoſius II. Frivolity of the Greeks.

VALENTINIAN III. *in the Weſt*; MARCIAN *in the Eaſt*.

THEODOSIUS the younger having left only one daughter, who was married to Valentinian, the emperour of the Weſt, he ſeemed to have the rightful claim to ſucceed, but his imbecility kept him inactive. Pulcheria ſeized the reins of government, and proſecuted Chryſaphus. After that eunuch was juſtly condemned, he was moſt iniquitouſly delivered up to the particular vengeance of a man whoſe father he had aſſaſſinated a number of years before. As the ſovereign authority had not hitherto been intruſted to a ſingle woman, ſhe caſt her eyes on Marcian, a ſoldier of fortune, whom ſhe eſteemed, and made him an offer of her hand, upon condition that he would reſpect her virginity, which ſhe had made a vow to preſerve. Marcian, who was then fifty eight years of age, promiſed what ſhe 450. Pulcheria marries Marcian to make him emperour.

ſhe required, and having been married to her, was immediately crowned.

Excellent government of that prince.

This prince was infirm, but bold, zealous, and vigilant; he greatly reſpected the empreſs, and applied moſt diligently to reform abuſes, ſetting an example of frugality and juſtice. He paſſed ſome laws calculated for the relief of the people; but others, dictated by his piety, were not ſo conformable to ſound policy. In oppoſition to an edict of Valentinian I. which declared void all donations made by women in favour of clerks and monks, he ordained that they ſhould be valid. All exerciſe of Pagan worſhip was forbidden under pain of death; but he behaved with moderation to the heretics, ſhewing favour to the orthodox, and endeavouring to conciliate the different parties. He was inſtructed by pope St. Leo and Pulcheria.

His laws in favour of religion and the clergy.

Valentinian paſſes a law for the relief of the people; but he continues to ruin them.

The Weſtern empire, where Placidia governed in the name of her ſon, was ready to fall a prey to the barbarians; and being oppreſſed by burdenſome taxes, which always irritate the minds of the people, they were inclined to change their maſters. Valentinian III. after having a long time promiſed to relieve the people of the provinces, at laſt publiſhed a law by which the debts due to the treaſury were remitted. He reproached himſelf with having ſo long deferred to make good his promiſes; and lamented the diſtreſs of the people, and the oppreſſions of his own officers, laying down this true and much neglected maxim.—*Whatever the labourer loſes, is loſt to the prince; the proſperity of the prince depending upon that of the labourer.* The diſgrace of a bad government is to make a diſplay of excellent maxims, yet to act in direct oppoſition to them. Valentinian always perſiſted in ruining both the country and cities by his luxury, while his ſtupid indolence gave every opportunity to the enemy to continue their ravages. Placidia died, and, though ſhe had her faults, every thing grew worſe after her death.

The Saxons and Angles reduce Britain.

We have ſeen that the Romans, being no longer able to defend Britain, had already abandoned it. The Britons

tons had ſeveral times in vain implored their aſſiſtance againſt the Picts and Scots; but even the great general, Aetius, believing that he could not comply with their wiſhes, they applied to the Saxons, ſettled at the mouth of the Elbe, who, with the Angles, very ſoon reduced that country which they came to deliver, and formed their heptarchy upon the ruin of the liberty of the iſlanders. Theſe ſeven kingdoms remained diſtinct till they were united by Egbert, the cotemporary of Charlemagne, as I ſhall have occaſion to mention in the Modern Hiſtory.

Genſeric draws Attila into Gaul.

The loſs of one fertile province, which by its diſtance prevented the ſame advantages being derived from it as formerly, might have been endured; but Attila threatened the very heart of the empire. After having heſitated whether he ſhould attack the Eaſt or the Weſt, he determined againſt the weakeſt, which had already ſuffered in ſo many different quarters. Genſeric having quarrelled with Theodoric, king of the Viſigoths, and being deſirous to embroil his affairs, invited the king of the Huns to penetrate into Gaul, who very eaſily found a pretence for making the invaſion.

The demands of the king of the Huns from Valentinian III.

Honoria, the daughter of the empreſs Placidia, who was made a nun, carried on a ſecret correſpondence with Attila, and having ſent him a ring as a pledge of her reſolution to marry him, and to tranſmit to him her title to the crown, he ſent to demand this princeſs, and the half of the empire to which he ſuppoſed her entitled. Valentinian anſwered, that Honoria was already married, and beſides, ſhe had no right to any ſhare of the empire, which was ſettled upon the males. By negotiating with the Romans and Viſigoths at the ſame time, Attila concealed his intention of deſtroying both. Beſide his power, he knew how to employ the addreſs of a ſkilful politician.

451. Gaul ravaged by the Huns.

At the head of an army of five hundred thouſand men, which conſiſted of a vaſt number of nations, led by their kings, the Gepidæ, Rugii, Turcilingi, Oſtrogoths, &c. &c. he marched along the bank of the Danube,

nube, and paſſed the Rhine. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the dreadful ravages which were committed in Gaul, between the Rhine, the Seine, the Marne, and the Moſelle. All theſe countries were pillaged, the towns burnt, and the fields covered with dead bodies.

Aetius makes them retire.

The general Aetius advanced with a ſmall army to Arles, and fortunately perſuaded the king of the Viſigoths, that both nations were equally involved in danger, and that Attila only endeavoured to divide on purpoſe to deſtroy them. Theodoric joined the Romans; and Meroveus, king of the Francs, with the Burgundians, Armoricæ, and ſeveral other nations, increaſed the army of Aetius; who haſtened his march, and ſurpriſed Attila, who had taken poſſeſſion of Orleans, obliging him to retire towards Belgia.

Bloody battle in Champagne.

Attila, enraged at the affront, and reſolved to be revenged by coming to action, ſtopped in the plains of Champagne (in the dioceſe of Troyes as ſome ſay, or according to others of Chalons) where both armies met, and engaged with equal fury. A hundred and ſixty thouſand men at leaſt were ſuppoſed to have fallen in this action; Jornandes reckons two hundred and fifty two thouſand. Theodoric was killed; and Attila, being in danger, ordered the retreat to be ſounded.

Danger & retreat of Attila.

According to the cuſtom of the barbarians, the waggons of the army formed a kind of rampart round his camp; Attila placed bodies of troops on all ſides; and the enemy, who were expoſed to a ſhower of arrows, reſolved to reduce him by famine. It is reported of him, that he cauſed a pile to be erected of horſe ſaddles, on which he propoſed to burn himſelf if he was reduced to deſpair: but Aetius, dreading that the defeat of the Huns would render the Viſigoths and Francs too powerful, perſuaded the leaders of theſe nations to withdraw. Attila immediately retreated, and, though purſued by the Romans, reached Pannonia, and then got back to his own dominions. The moſt bloody battle that ever was fought, and his previous loſſes (for he was not at all ſparing of the blood of his troops) had in a great meaſure deſtroyed his army. However,

However, the Romans had ſcarce begun to recruit, when he poured upon Italy with freſh forces, ſpreading an univerſal alarm. Inſtead of defending the Alps, Aetius adviſed Valentinian to fly, and propoſed to ſet the example; but this ſhameful propoſal was rejected. The emperour, ſhut up in Rome, left the whole country beyond the Po without defence, in expectation that the barbarians would be ſatisfied with that prey. The Huns had already pillaged the capital of the Vindelici (at preſent Augſbourg), paſſed the Julian Alps, beſieged Aquileia, and took it by aſſault, deſtroying every thing in Venetia and Liguria. Attila, having found a picture at Milan, in which the emperour was painted, ſitting on a throne of gold, with a multitude of Huns lying dead at his feet, cauſed it to be defaced, and himſelf to be painted ſitting upon a throne, with the emperour ſtanding before him loaded with a bag of gold, which he was pouring out at his feet.

452. He very ſoon laid waſte Italy.

What he did at Milan.

During theſe ravages, the inhabitants of Venetia and Emilia fled for ſhelter to the iſlands in the gulph, where they built huts, from whence the city of Venice was formed, which will become famous in the Modern Hiſtory.

Origin of Venice.

Aetius, having procured aſſiſtance from Marcian, cut in pieces ſome detachments of Huns, whom he found means to ſurpriſe; but theſe trifling advantages ſcarce quieting the dread with which the people were inſpired, Valentinian ſent to Attila to ſue for peace. St. Leo, a pontiff who was equally reſpectable for his virtue and abilities, accompanied by two other deputies, ſoftened the heart of this cruel warrior. They agreed upon a truce, and conſented to pay a tribute. The conqueror withdrew, but threatened to return into Italy if Honoria, with all that belonged to her, was not ſent after him. Attila died the following year; he was called the *ſcourge of God:* the Romans deſerved that ſcourge.

Attila ſpares Rome.

452. His death.

He left ſeveral ſons, who, by their diſſenſions, ruined his vaſt dominions, which is the common effect of conqueſts too far extended. The king of the Gepidæ, and

Ruin of his empire.

the other vaſſals, following his example, revolted, and the barbarians were weakened by bloody wars. They formed ſeveral ſettlements in Illyria, Mæſia, Dacia, the Leſſer Scythia (at the mouths of the Danube) and became the allies of that empire which they were tearing in pieces. The Oſtrogoths, ſubjects of Attila, were the greateſt gainers by the revolution. Marcian granted them all Pannonia, from Upper Mæſia to Noricum, and from Dalmatia to the Danube. We ſhall ſee them ruling nobly in Italy.

The Oſtrogoths ſettled in Pannonia.

454. Valentinian ſuffered no leſs from his own vices than from the arms of the barbarians; and, having given himſelf up to ſtupid indolence and debauchery, violated the wife of Maximus, a man of rank and power, who vowed vengeance for this affront. Aetius was the only perſon that could ſave the prince and the ſtate; for which reaſon Maximus, by means of Heraclius the eunuch, cauſed him to be ſuſpected of rebellious purpoſes, and the emperour killed him with his own hand. He afterwards aſked one of his officers, if he had not done right to free himſelf. *It is not for me to preſume to judge your actions*, replied the officer, *but I think you have cut off your right hand with your left.* Though ambition might have inſpired that general with ſome faults, yet it was ſoon found that the loſs of him was the ruin of the empire.

Vices of Valentinian.

He kills the brave Aetius.

455. Maximus, having no longer any obſtruction, cauſed the emperour to be aſſaſſinated, and himſelf to be proclaimed. He was ſoon overpowered by the weight of the ſovereign authority, and every thing diſguſted and terrified him. His reign neceſſarily paſſed like a dream. He had compelled Eudoxia, Valentinian's widow, to marry him, and to win her affections proteſted that love was the cauſe of his offence. The princeſs ſhuddered with indignation, and ſecretly invited Genſeric to come and deliver her, promiſing to lead him by the hand into Rome.

Maximus cauſes the emperour to be aſſaſſinated, and ſucceeds him.

The king of the Vandals embarked his forces, and Maximus was aſſaſſinated in attempting to fly. Genſeric arrived, and Rome was given up to be pillaged: he carried

He is aſſaſſinated. Rome pillaged by Genſeric

carried off immenſe riches; the ſacred veſſels, which had been religiouſly reſpected by Alaric; one half of the valuable covering of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, which was of gilded bronze; an infinite number of ſtatues; and a great many illuſtrious captives, among whom was Eudoxia herſelf, and her two daughters. Marcian claimed the princeſſes, but was refuſed, for Genſeric did not even reſpect the empire of Conſtantinople.

Maximus reigned only three months. Avitus, of Gauliſh origin, greatly eſteemed as an individual, aſſumed the purple and reigned ſcarcely one year. Count Ricimer, the ſon of a prince of the Suevi, deſpiſed this new emperour, who made himſelf contemptible by his irregularities; and, having ſtirred up a ſedition againſt him, attacked him in the neighbourhood of Placentia, where he took him priſoner, and cauſed him to be conſecrated a biſhop. (This was a common method of puniſhing thoſe that were dethroned, or of rendering them incapable of new attempts. The cuſtom which was eſtabliſhed afterwards by the barbarians, of making them turn monks, ſeems better: it did not expoſe the office of biſhop to contempt.) Avitus, afraid of being put to death, wanted to ſave himſelf by flying to his own country, but died upon the road. The throne continued vacant ſeveral months. Could it be aimed at by any reaſonable degree of ambition?

Avitus aſſumes the purple, & is dethroned by Ricimer.

From the time of Theodoſius, Marcian, though too ignorant to eſcape errours, was the only perſon who ſeemed worthy of the ſovereign power. He died in the ſeventh year of his reign; Pulcheria having died four years before him, the Greek church inſtituted a feſtival in honour of them.

457. Deaths of Marcian and Pulcheria.

The general council of Chalcedon, which was aſſembled in 451 by the zeal of Marcian and Pulcheria, having condemned the doctrine of Eutyches, made ſome regulations which it is of importance to mention in this place. By them the monks were ſubjected to the juriſdiction of the ordinary, and prohibited from intermeddling

Regulations of the council of Chalcedon.

termeddling in affairs either eccleſiaſtic or ſecular without the expreſs orders of the biſhop in caſes of neceſſity. The clergy were prohibited from being tranſlated to one church from another, under pain of excommunication. They fixed the rank of the ſee of Conſtantinople next to Rome. (The Greeks wanted afterwards that the two ſees ſhould be perfectly equal, ſince Conſtantinople was the capital of the Eaſt, as Rome was of the Weſt.) Saint Leo conſtantly rejected this decree, and maintained that Alexandria and Antioch ought to preſerve the pre-eminence. Since that council, the title of patriarchal has been given to the churches of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Conſtantinople, and Jeruſalem.

The ſee of Conſtantinople declared the next to Rome.

Valentinian III. on account of St. Hilary of Arles, who had been condemned by St. Leo, made a decree in 446, prohibiting all biſhops from making any innovations without the authority of the pope; likewiſe declaring, that all ordinances of the ſee of Rome ſhould be a law to all other biſhops; and alſo, that if any prelate, ſummoned by the biſhop of Rome, refuſed to appear before his tribunal, he ſhould be compelled by the governour of the province. By procuring this edict, Leo greatly increaſed his authority. Appeals to Rome were unknown before the council of Sardis in 347; and that council only decreed, that if a biſhop who was condemned deſired a new trial before the council, they who examined the caſe ſhould apply to the biſhop of Rome, who would appoint judges, if he ſaw reaſon, for renewing the trial. The greater credit the popes acquired, the more it was to be expected they would extend their prerogative. They were not all ſo deſerving as Leo.

Laws of Valentinian III. in favour of the popes, procured by St. Leo.

Appeals to Rome.

In 452, the ſame emperour, tired with numberleſs complaints againſt the ſentences of the biſhops, prohibited the clergy from meddling in any cauſes but thoſe of religion; nevertheleſs allowing biſhops to be choſen as arbiters, if agreeable to both parties; but declaring that a claimant of the laity might proſecute a clergyman before ſecular judges in all civil or criminal matters. Ba-

Another law to reſtrain the eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction.

ronius

ronius taxes this law with impiety, as if Jeſus Chriſt had come to withdraw a conſiderable part of the people from the authority of the laws. It is very extraordinary to find men judging of things, not from their nature, but from what they happen to be accidentally againſt their nature.

The deſtroying of tombs prohibited.

Valentinian by a very ſevere law forbid the deſtruction of tombs, into which avarice, on pretence of driving out idolatry, went in ſearch of treaſures.

Succeſſors of VALENTINIAN III. *and* MARCIAN *to* ANASTASIUS.

CHAP. I.

To the Eſtabliſhment of the Kingdom of Italy by Odoacer.

History becomes leſs intereſting.

HISTORY becomes more obſcure and leſs intereſting in proportion as the ravages of the barbarians increaſe; and morals, humanity, ſcience, and reaſon, diſappear under the ruins of the empire. It is therefore ſufficient to have a general idea of the principal facts: a detail of particulars would be equally uſeleſs and tireſome: what does not deſerve to be known, deſerves as little to be written.

The general Aſpar.

Aſpar, general of the troops of the Eaſt, an Alan by birth, and a zealous Arian, was deſirous of reigning under the name of another, as he deſpaired of uniting the ſuffrages in his own favour. He therefore cauſed the election to fall upon Leo, who was only a tribune; and the new emperour was crowned by the patriarch of Conſtantinople. (This was the firſt ſovereign crowned by a biſhop.) Leo had promiſed the general to make one of his children Cæſar, and did not execute his promiſe. *Does it become an emperour*, ſaid Aſpar one day to him, *to break his word?—It becomes him ſtill leſs*, replied Leo, *to be dictated to like a ſlave.*

447. Leo emperour of the Eaſt.

In

Majorianus proclaimed in the West.

In the West, Ricimer, having dethroned Avitus, likewise created an emperour, whom he flattered himself with the hopes of governing, and was in like manner mistaken in his choice. Majorianus was no sooner proclaimed than he shewed himself capable of governing.

His laws respecting taxes;

He began with enacting laws for the re-establishment of good order, cancelled all debts due to the treasury, and ordered that the taxes should be raised by the governours of the provinces, instead of the officers of the exchequer, whose exactions were more oppressive than the taxes themselves.

against women entering into nunneries before the age of forty;

The monasteries being converted into prisons, where many parents, actuated by motives of avarice or ambition, shut up their daughters from their infancy, though their disposition often rendered them entirely unfit for a religious life, he prohibited the veil from being given till the age of forty, and condemned the parents to forfeit a third of their property if they committed this violence, to which he gives the name of parricide. A similar regulation was made by pope Leo. But this law of Majorianus was abrogated by his successor, as well as another, by which all widows under forty were obliged to marry again within five years, under penalty of forfeiting half their property to their heirs at law. The first law concerning monasteries has at different times been attempted to be put in force, but it has been prevented by numberless obstacles.

for the marriage of widows

Checks the Visigoths in Gaul.

The empire stood in need of a warlike prince still more than of a legislator; for amidst the convulsions raised in it by the barbarians, the laws were without vigour. The Vandals and Moors, having made an attack upon the coasts of Campania, were defeated at Sinuessa, and Majorianus resolved to carry the war into their country; but it was necessary first to re-establish tranquillity in Gaul, where Theodoric II. king of the Visigoths, stirred up the different nations, attacked the centre of the provinces, and even made himself master of Lyons. Egidius, who by a kind of miracle united the dignity of king of the Francs to the office of general of the Romans,

mans, gained conſiderable advantages over Theodoric. Sometime after the emperour arrived, and, after defeating the Viſigoths, concluded a treaty, by which they engaged to ſuccour him againſt the Vandals. He afterwards paſſed the Pyrenees, with a reſolution to embark at Carthagena. But Genſeric, having a ſecret correſpondence on board the fleet, found means to deſtroy it; and the expedition being no longer poſſible, peace was concluded, which, however, the Vandals did not long obſerve.

His fruitleſs paſſage of the Pyrenees.

Ricimer, diſſatisfied with an emperour who would not ſuffer himſelf to be governed, formed a plot againſt his life, of which Majorianus fell a victim, and Ricimer ſet up in his room one Severus, but who he was is not known, his name being but once mentioned in hiſtory. Four years after, this phantom having diſappeared we know not how, he governed the ſtate with abſolute authority during a year and a half. We ſhall omit ſeveral wars of the barbarians with each other, or with the Romans, becauſe they preſent us with nothing intereſting. It is ſufficient to remark, that Egidius, having become odious on account of his tyranny, was driven out by the Francs, and Childeric, whoſe crown had been conferred upon him, was reſtored.

461. Ricimer gets rid of Majorianus.

However low the Romans were ſunk, they could no longer bear the tyranny of a Suevian, and therefore applied to Leo for an emperour, who ſent them Anthemius, grandſon of him that governed under Theodoſius the Younger. Count Ricimer married one of his daughters, and left him the name of emperour, till he had a reaſon for diveſting him of it.

467. Anthemius emperour.

Leo, like thoſe weak princes to whom the decay of the empire is to be aſcribed, was deficient in genius and political ſkill. It is true, one of his laws contains this admirable maxim—*Juſtice being the nobleſt prerogative of ſovereign majeſty, princes ought not to think themſelves indulged in greater latitude than private perſons.* But for a long time people contented themſelves with fine maxims, without joining to them what is moſt eſ-

Excellent maxim of Leo contradicted by his practice.

ſential,

He orders baptiſm.

ſential, a juſt and prudent conduct. Leo commanded every perſon to be baptized, under pain of baniſhment, and made it capital to relapſe into idolatry after the performance of the ceremony. Can Chriſtians then be made by a forced baptiſm? *It is the peculiar character of the true religion not to conſtrain, but perſuade.* (Athan.) In a word, the emperour built churches, but he could not govern.

He fits out a ruinous armament againſt Genſeric.

Seeing that Genſeric's fleets inſulted Greece, he exhauſted himſelf in making preparations againſt this formidable enemy. The armament coſt him 130,000lb. of gold; and he gave the command of it to Baſiliſcus, his brother in law, a man equally deſtitute of courage and abilities, who ſuffered himſelf to be corrupted by the promiſes of the Arians and the money of the barbarians. The fleet was burnt near Carthage, the Romans cut in pieces, and Genſeric reaped the peaceable fruits of his triumph during the remainder of his reign, without any perſon daring to attack him. The barbarians had founded their power by war: they knew how to ſupport it by an union of policy with force.

His faults increaſe.

After this diſaſter, Leo ſuſpected every thing, and ſought a ſupport from the Iſaurians, a nation of mountaineers, who ſubſiſted by plunder, and had often ravaged the provinces of Aſia. For this purpoſe he drew to court Zeno, a man diſtinguiſhed among them for his birth, but void of every ſpecies of merit, whom he made his ſon in law, general of the army, and afterwards conſul; theſe honours exciting the jealouſy of the haughty Aſpar, Zeno in a ſhort time fled to Sardica to eſcape a conſpiracy. Aſpar preſſing the emperour to give one of his ſons the quality of Cæſar, as he had engaged when he aſſumed the diadem, Leo was forced to yield, and decided in favour of Patricius, the youngeſt. After this he rendered his government more contemptible and odious, by cauſing Aſpar and the eldeſt of his ſons to be maſſacred, and Patricius with difficulty eſcaped, covered with wounds.

Ricimer,

Ricimer, dreading to ſuffer the ſame fate at Rome that Aſpar had done at Conſtantinople, took up arms againſt the emperour Anthemius, when Leo ſent Olybrius to reconcile them; but this man, inſtead of fulfilling his commiſſion, ſuffering himſelf to be proclaimed by the rebels, Ricimer gained a battle, took the city of Rome, abandoned it to pillage, and, after cauſing Anthemius to be murdered in his preſence, died in a ſhort time of a violent diſtemper. He had four times diſpoſed of the empire, treating the ſovereigns like ſlaves, whoſe diſobedience he looked upon as a capital crime. Olybrius ſcarce ſurvived him three months, and was ſucceeded by Glycerius, who is only known by name. The empire of the Weſt was confined to Italy, Dalmatia, and a ſmall part of Gaul; and the Oſtrogoths, who were ſettled in Pannonia, ſtill threatened it with new diſmemberments. At laſt Glycerius was dethroned by Nepos, an officer of the Eaſtern emperour, and became biſhop of Salona.

472. Revolt & death of Ricimer.

Olybrius and Glycerius.

Nepos.

In the mean time Leo died, leaving a ſon of the ſame name, who did not long ſurvive him, and bequeathed the empire to Zeno. This barbarian, ſtained with infamy, pillaging his ſubjects, and affecting a ridiculous devotion, made himſelf odious even to his mother in law, to whom he was indebted for his fortune. A conſpiracy was immediately formed againſt him, when the daſtardly Baſiliſcus was ſet upon the throne, and the daſtardly Zeno fled to the mountains of Iſauria. Two years after he was reſtored; and though he ſwore to preſerve the life of Baſiliſcus and his children, he thought that he did not perjure himſelf by ordering them to be ſtarved to death. (477.)

474. Zeno, a bad emperour of the Eaſt.

Thus diſorder and confuſion reigned in both empires. But the Weſtern was on the verge of ruin. Euric, king of the Viſigoths, had ſubdued all Spain, except Galicia, where the Suevi maintained themſelves; and he wanted only Auvergne, to be maſter of all the ſouthern part of Gaul, as far as the Rhoſne, which Nepos was conſtrained to cede to him in 474. The emperour, being

Progreſs of the Viſigoths in Spain and Gaul.

being desirous of securing the rest of Gaul, commanded the patrician Orestes to march thither with an army. This officer, who had formerly been secretary to Attila, collected a body of troops, and, forming a design of dethroning the emperour, marched to Ravenna, which Nepos quitted by flight; and Orestes raised to the throne his own son Romulus, surnamed Augustus, commonly called Augustulus, on account of his youth, or from contempt for his person. In him will end the empire of the West.

Augustulus last emperour of the West.

CHAP. II.

Odoacer destroys the Empire of the West.—Is dethroned by Theodoric.

476. Conquest of Italy by Odoacer.

ODOACER, whose original is unknown, at the head of several tribes of barbarians, particularly the Heruli, who came from Prussia, made his way into Italy, with a view to establish himself there. It is pretended that his army, being in the pay of the empire, demanded one third of the lands as a just recompense for their services; and, disgusted at the refusal of Orestes, chose for their leader Odoacer, a private soldier in the imperial guards, a man of low birth, but designed by nature for great actions. This general attacked Pavia, where Orestes had shut himself up; and, after having taken the place by assault, and cut off that patrician's head, flew to Ravenna, gave Augustulus his life, who had voluntarily quitted the purple, and confining him in a castle, with a considerable pension, subdued all Italy, of which he styled himself king. Genseric ceded to him the island of Sicily, except the city of Lilybæum, with a reservation of the rights of sovereignty, and an annual tribute. An able conqueror only needed to appear. This sudden revolution was become unavoidable.

Such

Such was the end of the Weſtern empire 1229 years after the building of Rome. "Rome," ſays Monteſquieu, "roſe to a great height of power, becauſe ſhe "had waged only ſucceſſive wars; each nation, by an "inconceivable good fortune, attacking her only after "another had been ruined; but ſhe was deſtroyed, be-"cauſe all the nations attacked her at once, and broke "in upon her from all quarters." We have obſerved in many parts of this work the particular cauſes which at a diſtance prepared its fall.

Obſervation on the fall of the empire.

The people gained by their change of maſter, Odoacer procuring for them peace and plenty. He retained the ſame laws, the ſame officers, the form of the government, and diminiſhed the impoſts. Though an Arian, he honoured the holy biſhops, and gave the Catholics no diſturbance. It is an intereſting ſight to behold the barbarians make their government beloved, after ſo many Romans had reigned like barbarians or idiots. The conqueror was even political enough to ſend to Zeno the imperial ornaments, and to requeſt the dignity of Patrician, as if he had been choſen by the ſenate to defend the Weſt; a method highly proper for gaining the hearts of the conquered people. The emperour, in his anſwer to the deputies of Odoacer, deſired them to have recourſe to Nepos, the lawful ſovereign; and yet gave Odoacer the title of Patrician in a letter which he wrote to him. This was doubtleſs the effect of a well founded fear.

Odoacer governs with prudence.

He demands from Zeno the title of Patrician.

This mean ſpirited emperour, as well by his treachery as his ſtupidity and weakneſs, drew upon himſelf the hatred and contempt of the Oſtrogoths, who were ſettled in Pannonia and Thrace, a ſet of dangerous confederates, and conſtant enemies the moment they could find a pretext for a quarrel. They were then governed by two kings, who bore the common name of Theodoric; the one ſurnamed the Squint Eyed, the other Amalus. The latter was a young prince of uncommon merit, whom we ſhall ſoon ſee maſter and legiſlator of Italy. He had been brought up at Conſtantinople, to which

Zeno hated and deſpiſed by the Oſtrogoths.

Riſe of the famous Theodoric.

which he was ſent as a hoſtage almoſt from his cradle; and, on account of his fidelity, had been loaded by Zeno with the higheſt honours, the rank of Patrician, the title of general, and even of the emperour's ſon of arms, a kind of adoption by which the father and ſon were bound mutually to aſſiſt each other in war. This cuſtom of the barbarians probably gave riſe to the ancient military chivalry.

Adoption of arms.

Zeno armed the two Theodorics againſt each other, betrayed them, and turned their reſentment againſt himſelf. The provinces were ravaged to the very gates of the capital. Though he conſtantly purchaſed peace, he never could obſerve it. After the death of Theodoric the Squint Eyed, he endeavoured to gain Amalus, by beſtowing on him new titles, erecting a ſtatue in his honour, and ceding to him ſome territory: but it would have been a greater happineſs had the emperour known how to keep him.

The two Theodorics join againſt the emperour.

At the ſame time Zeno, endeavouring to pacify the theologians, only kindled the fire of diſputes. The council of Chalcedon being attacked by a multitude of enthuſiaſts, as well as that of Epheſus, he publiſhed an edict of union, called the ἑνωτικον, to eſtabliſh uniformity of belief; a thing ſtill more difficult than to defend the empire againſt the barbarians. By this edict he anathematizes Neſtorius and Eutyches, and propoſes a formulary of doctrine, to which all his ſubjects ſhould be bound to conform; but, though it was ſtrictly conſonant to the Catholic opinions, the orthodox almoſt unanimouſly expreſſed a violent diſapprobation, becauſe the prince dared to pronounce on matters of faith, and ſeemed to think that the deciſions of the council of Chalcedon might be rendered more valid by his confirmation. The quarrels therefore continued, and ſtill with the ſame effects.

Zeno's *henoticon* for reconciling the theologiſts.

The reſt of Zeno's reign is only a continued ſeries of confuſion, and ſcenes of cruelty, from which humanity ſhrinks with horrour. His mother in law and wife having conſpired the deſtruction of Illus, maſter of the offices,

Cabals & revolts.

offices, who had raiſed him to the throne, that officer revolted, and gave the title of emperour to Leontius; but Theodoric, being ſent againſt the rebels, gained a complete victory, and they were beheaded. The king of the Oſtrogoths afterwards defeated the Bulgarians, a nation firſt ſettled on the banks of the Wolga, from whence they removed to the neighbourhood of the Danube; we ſhall find them make a great figure in the ſequel of this hiſtory. The emperour ſoon quarrelled with his deliverer.

Theodoric demands permiſſion to conquer Italy.

Theodoric having taken up arms againſt him, advanced into the neighbourhood of Conſtantinople, which he threatened with a ſiege, when an interview was propoſed to him, and he demanded permiſſion to make a conqueſt of Italy. *If I ſucceed*, ſaid he to Zeno, *I will hold my new kingdom of you; if I periſh in the attempt, you will be freed from the ſubſidy which you are obliged to pay us.* To this propoſal the emperour conſented, and transferred his right to Theodoric; a ceſſion which has always been looked upon by the Goths as abſolute and perpetual, though the Romans pretended the contrary. It is not to be queſtioned that the kingdom of Italy, though really independent, yet, in appearance, acknowledged the ſovereignty of the Eaſtern empire. Before Theodoric finiſhed his conqueſt, Zeno, by a miſerable death, put an end to a reign which had been productive of nothing but miſchief.

491. He defeats Odoacer in three battles.

This conqueror, who deſerves to be ranked among the greateſt monarchs, followed by almoſt his whole nation (the old men, women, and children, accompanying his army) after defeating the Gepidæ, who diſputed his paſſage, gained a victory over Odoacer between Aquileia and the Julian Alps, another at Verona, and a third on the bank of the Addua (Adda). Odoacer, who had behaved with his uſual courage, ſeeing his efforts to no purpoſe, ſhut himſelf up in Ravenna, where he was ſoon inveſted. The ſiege laſted two years and a half; and the port being ſhut, the inhabitants were reduced, by a famine ſo dreadful as to oblige them to feed upon leather, to the neceſſity of ſurrendering or periſhing. A

Siege of Ravenna.

494. Theodoric murders Odoacer, but displays the qualities of a great monarch.

A negotiation was entered into, by which Odoacer yielded Ravenna and all Italy to Theodoric, reſerving to himſelf the honours of royalty; but a few days after the victor ſlew him with his own hand. They who attempt to juſtify Theodoric, pretend that he had diſcovered a plot againſt his perſon; but unprejudiced authors forbear attempting to waſh off the ſtain of this black treachery; which, however, was in ſome meaſure compenſated by a reign that will be memorable through all ages. In the whole hiſtory of the emperours, we find few models of government ſo perfect as that of Theodoric, and the recital of ſome particulars of it cannot fail to convey inſtruction.

CHAP. III.

Theodoric the Great eſtabliſhed in Italy.

Theodoric not entirely unacquainted with learning, as is affirmed by ſome.

IF Theodoric (as is aſſerted, contrary to all probability, by an ancient anonymous writer) was ſo illiterate that he could neither read nor write, he muſt have been a prodigy, to govern with all the judgment and prudence of a man perfectly well educated. According to Procopius, he forbid the children of the Goths from ſtudy, under pretence that, *after ſtanding in awe of a rod, they would tremble at ſight of a ſword.* But ſuch tales are more than doubtful. Not to mention that in his youth he paſſed ten years at Conſtantinople, where a perſon of his genius could not fail of receiving ſome tincture of literature; he ſhewed too much eſteem for learned men, and granted them too great a ſhare of his favour, to be ſuſpected of groſs ignorance.

Boetius, Caſſiodorus, and others.

The firſt offices were filled by Boetius, Caſſiodorus, and other men of abilities. Theodoric's letters contain the higheſt encomiums on learning; and can we ſuppoſe that his ſecretary, Caſſiodorus, would have expoſed him to ridicule, by making him affect to commend a thing of which he was entirely ignorant? Beſides, it is obſerved,

ſerved, that Dion Caſſius, in a hiſtory which he wrote of the Goths, affirms them not to have been inferior in ſcience to the Greeks.

Italy happy under his government.

The happineſs which Italy had enjoyed under Odoacer was increaſed under the new monarch. The Goths had only a third part of the lands, and the diſtribution was made in the leaſt oppreſſive manner poſſible. They were ſubjected to taxes as well as the Romans.—*It is not force but juſtice that ought to hold the ſceptre*, ſaid Theodoric to his ſubjects in general; *you live in the ſame empire, therefore be friends; let the Goths love the Romans as their neighbours and brethren, and the Romans regard the Goths as their defenders.*

Equality between the Goths and Romans.

Economy and plenty.

The treaſury was filled by a prudent economy, which, without burdening the people, ſupplied funds for great enterpriſes. So great was the plenty, that threeſcore ſacks of wheat were commonly ſold for an *aureus*, a piece of gold worth about 25 denarii, or 16s. $1\frac{3}{4}$d. and ſo ſtrict was the police, that people might travel in the utmoſt ſecurity either by day or night.

Legiſlation and juſtice.

In a word, the Roman police, laws, and cuſtoms, ſtill ſubſiſted, to which even the Goths in eſſential matters were ſubjected, though in thoſe of leſs importance they were permitted to follow their ancient uſages. They had a Gothic count for their judge, who took a Roman aſſeſſor, when one of that nation happened to be a party. If both parties were Romans, the cauſe was tried before Roman magiſtrates.—*Let other conquerors*, ſays Theodoric, in one of his letters, *pillage or deſtroy the cities they have taken: for our part, we deſire to make the vanquiſhed regret that they were not ſooner ſubjected to our dominion.* He had the adminiſtration of juſtice ſo much at heart, that he cauſed ſome judges to be beheaded for having protracted a ſuit three years.

Duels prohibited.

Almoſt all the barbarous nations decided their differences by ſingle combat, but this cuſtom was proſcribed by Theodoric as execrable. It was his aim to unite in the character of the Goths the Roman humanity, with their national bravery. It was his common

ſaying,

saying, that *the life of a man could not be too dearly purchaſed at any price.* Never had the Romans been inſpired with ſuch principles of humanity.

Toleration of religion.

His conduct with regard to religion was always regulated by this maxim, which was peculiar to him—*We have no authority over religion, becauſe belief ought to be free.* Though of the Arian ſect, he honoured virtuous Catholics, and maintained order and peace. Symmachus and Laurentius contending by force of arms for the ſee of Rome, he ordered that he who had been firſt elected by a majority of voices ſhould be deemed the lawful biſhop; but the ſchiſm continuing, he aſſembled councils to determine the diſpute, and by his authority enforced the execution of the ſentence which was given in favour of Symmachus.

Theodoric decides who is true pope.

Symmachus juſtifies himſelf, and procures a decree of a council, declaring the pope impeccable.

In one of theſe councils the pope cleared himſelf by oath of ſome accuſations brought againſt him, and procured a decree, confirming a writing of the deacon Ennodius, which bears, that *the holy ſee gives impeccability to thoſe who fill it; or rather, that God permits none to riſe to it except thoſe whom he has predeſtinated to be ſaints.* A ſtriking proof of the power which prejudice had already gained over men of weak minds. This decree was afterward uſed by Gregory VII. as a foundation for ſome of his pretenſions.

Politics and alliances of Theodoric.

Few politicians have equalled Theodoric in the art of managing the intereſts of a nation, ſettling it on a firm footing, and preventing the enterpriſes of its neighbours. Without drawing a ſword, after the death of Odoacer, he enjoyed his conqueſt as if it had been a peaceable inheritance; formed alliances with the barbarous nations round him; married the daughter of Clovis, who in 486 had annihilated the Roman power in Gaul by the defeat of Syagrius; gave one of his daughters to Alaric, king of the Viſigoths; another to the ſon of Gondebald, king of the Burgundians; and his ſiſter to Traſamond, king of the Vandals. Far from fomenting the quarrels of thoſe princes in order to weaken them by help of one another, and aggrandize himſelf at their expenſe, he laboured

boured to inſpire them with a ſpirit of peace, concord, and humanity; but notwithſtanding his advice and remonſtrances, the ambitious Clovis having defeated Alaric, and made himſelf maſter of great part of his territories, Theodoric ſent an army to the aſſiſtance of the Viſigoths, and preſerved the ſhattered remains of their monarchy, not ſo much with a view of appropriating it to himſelf as of ſetting bounds to that conqueror's ambition.

Aſſiſts the Viſigoths againſt Clovis.

That great king was principally indebted for his ſucceſs to his talent of diſcovering, and his care of rewarding and employing, real merit. One of his favourites was Artemidorus, an illuſtrious Greek, with whom he had formed a connexion at Conſtantinople; and who, without deſcending to intrigue or flattery, employed his credit only for the ſacred purpoſe of promoting the good of the ſubjects. Liberius, who till the revolution had been inviolably attached to Odoacer, being made captain of the guards, ſerved his new maſter with the ſame fidelity he had ſhewn to the old; managed the finances with uncommon integrity and economy; ſubjected the barbarians to the rules of diſcipline; preſided over the diſtribution of lands; and, by an almoſt unexampled adherence to the rules of equity, cloſely united the two nations. Ibas, Tolonic, and the other generals, always returned from their expeditions with victory.

He employs men of uncommon merit.

Artemidorus and Liberius.

To conclude the liſt, Caſſiodorus, who was inveſted with all dignity; queſtor, (which anſwers to what is now called chancellor in France) maſter of the offices, (now grand maſter) patrician, conſul, captain of the guards, and even general of the army;—Caſſiodorus, I ſay, in the exerciſe of every one of theſe offices, diſplayed equal virtue and ability. If, according to Mr. Le Beau's obſervation, in the letters which he wrote for Theodoric, *the hand of the ſecretary be too often viſible, and the majeſty of the great monarch debaſed by the ſtyle of a declaimer*, it is a conſequence of the depravation of taſte, to which even the greateſt genius is obnoxious. But this ought to heighten our admiration of that virtuous

Caſſiodorus.

tuous policy which directed the Gothic prince, and was expreſſed by the organ of the miniſter. Let us return to the hiſtory of the empire; though from this period it is not very intereſting; we ſhall therefore content ourſelves with giving a few general ideas, till we come to the reign of Juſtinian.

ANASTASIUS.

491. Anaſtaſius emperour in the Eaſt, quarrels with Euphemius the patriarch.

LONGINUS, the brother of Zeno, who was as contemptible and odious as that emperour, flattered himſelf in vain with the hopes of the throne. The empreſs Ariadne loved Anaſtaſius, the *ſilentiary* of the palace, an officer of low rank and obſcure birth, and took her meaſures ſo as to get him proclaimed. Euphemius, the patriarch, who deteſted him for being an Eutychian, had formerly driven him out of the church, threatening to cut off his hair, and expoſe him to the deriſion of the populace; nor would he conſent to crown him till he ſigned a profeſſion of his faith, with a promiſe to ſupport the council of Chalcedon. In a ſhort time after, Euphemius made himſelf ſuſpected of favouring the Iſaurians, who were in rebellion; and Anaſtaſius, having defeated them, ſent him the following meſſage: *Your prayers in favour of your friends have not been hearkened to.* He then accuſed him before an aſſembly of the biſhops, and baniſhed him after they had pronounced the ſentence of depoſition.

He takes a ſide in the factions of the circus.

Theſe preludes foreboded freſh diſturbances in eccleſiaſtical affairs, in which the emperours had intermeddled with very little diſcretion; but a ſtill more conſpicuous fault was, the encouraging one of the factions, which had ſprung up from the prevailing rage for public diverſions. The *greens*, the *blues*, and the *reds*, (theſe were the colours by which the charioteers in the circus were diſtinguiſhed) were as violently exaſperated againſt one another as the parties of Marius and Sylla had been, when the liberty of Rome and the empire of the world

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was the ſubject of contention. Inſtead of ſtifling theſe unlucky and abſurd diſſenſions by prudent attention, Anaſtaſius favoured one of the parties, which, of courſe, made them more violent, and occaſioned dreadful maſſacres, in one of which no leſs than three thouſand men were murdered. The extravagance of the Athenians upon ſimilar ſubjects had never occaſioned any bloodſhed.

Inſtances of prudence and goodneſs in Anaſtaſius.

Anaſtaſius has been commonly repreſented as a bad prince, a hypocritical devotee, an unjuſt, avaricious perſecutor; however, his reign affords inſtances of conduct highly laudable. He gave great application to buſineſs; was a good economiſt; beneficent, and abſtemious in his pleaſures; he baniſhed informers out of Conſtantinople; forbid the judges to obey the particular reſcripts of the ſovereign, if they were contrary to the public good, or the eſtabliſhed laws; aboliſhed the inhuman combats of men with wild beaſts, and the ſale of offices, which was an illegal practice introduced by avarice; he ſuppreſſed the χρυσάργυον, that odious tax which was laid upon all kinds of commodities, from which even beggary was not exempted, and which brought great ſums of money into the treaſury. A feſtival was inſtituted at Edeſſa, to celebrate the abolition of this tax.

Cabades, king of Perſia, dethroned and reſtored.

The emperour defeated and chaſtiſed the Iſaurians, but he was not ſo fortunate againſt the Perſians. No treaty could extinguiſh the averſion in which the Romans and that people held one another from the time of the unfortunate expedition under Craſſus. Peroſus, king of the Perſians, had lately periſhed in a war with the Nephtalite Huns, whom he had irritated by a piece of horrid treachery. His ſon Cabades, having aboliſhed ſome of the cuſtoms of his country, and diſturbed the peace of ſociety, by making women common, provoked his people to dethrone him; but the generoſity of the Huns (for theſe people were ſuſceptible of elevated ſentiments) afforded him an aſylum. He was reſtored; and, profiting by his diſgrace, formed a better ſyſtem for his future government. The Perſians wanted the

Armenians, who were Chriſtians, to ſubmit to their religion, and join in worſhipping fire, which occaſioned a rebellion; but Cabades pacified them by reſtoring the free exerciſe of their religion, and employed his arms againſt the Romans.

War with the Perſians followed by a diſgraceful peace.

Anaſtaſius having refuſed to pay a ſum of money which he demanded, Cabades took up arms, and made himſelf maſter of the famous town of Amida, which had been fruitleſſly attempted by Sapor. He got admittance by a tower which was guarded by ſome drunken monks, or rather ought to have been guarded: but according to ſome authors they treacherouſly opened the gates to him. The emperour ſent ſome generals to oppoſe him, among whom a miſunderſtanding ſubſiſted, which proved a ſource of new diſgraces. They made an unſucceſsful attempt upon Amida, and then purchaſed a peace, by paying a very conſiderable ſum of money; the treaty being concluded in 505, after a war of three years. The enemy reſtored Amida, and had no more than ſeven days proviſion left when the Romans, who beſieged it, purchaſed that ſhameful peace.*

505. The Oſtrogoths ſeize Pannonia.

The ſame year the empire ſuffered a misfortune equally humiliating. Theodoric ſeized Pannonia; and Pitzia, one of his generals, with an army of two thouſand five hundred men, gained a complete victory. The ſpeech which he made to his troops before the action is the more worthy of notice, as it does not reſemble the ſtudied harangues given us by hiſtorians. It is the powerful and ingenuous expreſſion of his feelings.

Speech of their general.

You know your king, my companions, ſaid he; *our enemies likewiſe know him, for they have ſeen him fighting. Shew them that you reſemble him. Though abſent, he ſees you; and none of the noble actions you are now going to perform ſhall be unknown to him.* This general forbid his ſoldiers to carry off any ſpoils, but to leave the dead with their arms, to prove that the courage of the Goths was roufed by glory alone. On this occaſion they ſeemed to be Spartans. So

* The people of the Eaſtern empire were commonly called *Romans*, till the time of Charlemagne, when the name of the *Greek* empire was introduced.

So many victories gained by the barbarians, which had brought them ſeveral times to the gates of Conſtantinople, made the emperour afraid of their making freſh incurſions, and laying waſte the country. To put a ſtop to theſe invaſions, he cauſed a wall to be built, which reached from the Euxine ſea to the Propontis, being a ſpace of four hundred and twenty ſtadia, or eighteen leagues, about thirteen leagues diſtant from the city: its thickneſs was twenty feet, with towers at certain diſtances; but ſuch an immenſe conſtruction could not make up for the loſs of ancient valour. Anaſtatius made ſome weak attempts to be revenged of Theodoric, by ſending a fleet to inſult the coaſts of Italy, and by honouring Clovis with the title of patrician, or, as ſome ſay, that of conſul; but Clovis made no attempt in favour of the Romans; and Theodoric equipped a fleet, which very ſoon put a ſtop to their piracies.

Wall built by Anaſtaſius to protect Conſtantinople.

The church, the enemy of blood, had frequently been embrued with it, from theological diſputes; but religious wars had been hitherto unknown. We come now to mention the firſt inſtance of that dreadful ſcourge, which has been eloquently lamented by ſo many Chriſtians, and which was the offspring of fanaticiſm, party ſpirit, prejudices the moſt oppoſite to the goſpel, and paſſions the moſt deſtructive to ſociety. Anaſtaſius favoured the Eutychians, and provoked the Catholics, whoſe zeal was not always void of acrimony. The popes had excommunicated Acacius, formerly patriarch of Conſtantinople, becauſe he had communicated with ſome heretical prelates, or who were ſuſpected of hereſy. The condemnation of Acacius was become a neceſſary proof of orthodoxy, as the condemnation of St. Athanaſius had formerly been reckoned a clear proof of Arianiſm. Anaſtaſius found himſelf involved in a quarrel with the holy ſee, becauſe he refuſed to ſubſcribe it, and to abandon the ἑνωτικον of Zeno. It was his deſire that nobody ſhould be moleſted about the council of Chalcedon, but little reſpect was paid to his will: the leſs

The firſt religious war was kindled under that prince.

He involves himſelf in a quarrel with the popes, by refuſing to ſubſcribe the condemnation of Acacius.

Henotikon

leſs it was regarded the more did he expoſe it by acts of abſolute power.

A violent ſedition occaſioned by the patriarch Macedonius.

Having ſent one day to demand the act from the patriarch Macedonius by which he obliged himſelf at aſcending the throne to defend the doctrine of the council, an act which he ſaid tarniſhed the imperial dignity, Macedonius refuſed to deliver it. The emperour diſſembled for ſome time, and then transferred the privilege of an aſylum from the church of Macedonius to the Eutycheans, which inſtantly kindled the flame of ſedition. Two hundred monks came from Syria on purpoſe to expel the patriarch; another legion of them flocked from Paleſtine for his defence, and they quarrelled even in the church. Anaſtaſius cauſed the acts of the council of Chalcedon, which had been refuſed to him, to be carried off, and, having torn them, threw them into the fire. Two impoſtors having accuſed Macedonius of being guilty of ſome infamous crimes, he vindicated himſelf by proving that he was an eunuch; but however, he was ſent into baniſhment, where he died.

Legions of monks.

514. Anaſtaſius is inſulted on a charge of hereſy.

The ſeditions became daily more and more violent, and the emperour was publicly inſulted on a charge of hereſy; his ſtatues were thrown down; a monk and a nun, who were in his confidence, were both ſtabbed, and their bodies dragged through the ſtreets. Severe puniſhments provoked the popular fury, till at laſt Vitalianus, grandſon of the famous Aſpar, declared himſelf the avenger of the faith, by raiſing an army of ſixty thouſand men againſt the ſovereign. He paſſed the great wall, and encamped at the gates of Conſtantinople.

Open wars.

Proclus ſaves Conſtantinople.

Proclus, a natural philoſopher of Athens, not the platoniſt, whoſe works are ſtill extant, came to ſerve in the army of Anaſtaſius. He is ſaid to have burnt the enemy's fleet either with mirrors or an inflammable powder made of ſulphur; but it is certain that the fleet was burnt; that Vitalianus made new preparations; that Anaſtaſius promiſed to reform whatever he had done againſt

againſt the Catholic religion, and broke his promiſe, after having procured a peace upon that condition.

Three years after, this emperour died, when almoſt ninety years old. Some ſay that he was killed by lightning; others that he became mad from divine vengeance; his name was eraſed from the *dyptics*;* and Nicholas I. in one of his letters compares him to the Neros and the Dioclefians, though he was rather miſled than ſanguinary. 518. Death of the emperour.

It is worthy our greateſt attention to obſerve, that the ignorance of princes in religious matters made them guilty of moſt enormous and fatal errours; but the leſs ſurpriſing, as the biſhops were engaged in mutual diſſenſions. If it had not been for theſe diviſions, which diſtracted men's minds with uncertainty, and kindled a zeal for controverſy, they would not have been diverted from the ſtudy and exerciſe of morality, from whence they muſt have gathered the divine fruits of Chriſtianity in peace. How ſublime and comforting the idea it gives of the Divinity! What confidence in his juſtice and infinite mercy! What encouragement for the exerciſe of every virtue! Religion alone inſpires us with a contempt of earthly vanities, a deteſtation of vice, and indulgence for the frailties of our neighbours; invincible patience in misfortunes, and compaſſion for the unhappy; in one word, it inſpires us with charity and heroic courage. It tends to render every thing perfect, and ſanctify every action in common and ſocial life. Wherefore then ſuch errours and exceſſes on religious pretences? It is becauſe hereſy, ſhooting up under a thouſand different forms, inceſſantly ſtartles the faith by ſubtilties and ſophiſtry, by which almoſt the whole energy of men's minds is abſorbed in the conteſt. Diſputes engender hatred; from hatred ſprings every exceſs; and virtue, exhauſted with words and cabals, loſes her whole power. The example of the holy biſhops Evils conſequent upon hereſy.

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* The dyptics were a kind of public regiſters. There were both profane and ſacred; the names of conſuls and magiſtrates were inſcribed in the firſt; in the others, thoſe of people of conſequence, for whom prayers were to be offered up at the religious ceremonies.

was not followed by the multitude; princes and people were ſeized with a frenzy almoſt general; the church was torn in pieces, and the ſtate filled with inteſtine quarrels. This is one of the chief cauſes of thoſe calamities which are continually preſented to our view by hiſtory.

JUSTIN.

End of the Reign of Theodoric the Great.

518. Juſtin, a man of low birth, ſucceeds to the empire.

JUSTIN, a ſoldier of fortune, a native of Thrace, and born in the loweſt rank of life, who could neither read nor write, but being a zealous Catholic, and ſufficiently artful to ſupplant all his rivals, was elected to ſucceed Anaſtaſius. The money which he was employed to diſtribute in the name of another, he beſtowed as his own gift. Some factious people having raiſed a perſon of obſcure birth to the purple, he cauſed him to be conſecrated a biſhop. The three nephews of Anaſtaſius were totally neglected.

The people rule the biſhops.

This reign was waſted in religious diſputes; Juſtin from the firſt declaring in favour of the Orthodox who ruled in Conſtantinople. The people with violent outcries demanded that the memories of the Manicheans ſhould be made infamous, and even their bodies dug up; (Anaſtaſius himſelf was accuſed of being a Manichean;) that a feſtival ſhould be inſtituted in honour of the council of Chalcedon; (which is ſtill ſolemnized in the Greek church); that the biſhops who were in baniſhment ſhould be recalled; that the names of ſome others ſhould be inſcribed in the *dyptics*, &c. The patriarch was not permitted to begin the religious ceremonies till the people were obeyed; and ſuch was the influence of the populace on the moſt ſerious matters, that all they had ordained was confirmed by forty biſhops.

Juſtin a zealous Catholic.

Juſtin commanded that the moſt perfect ſubmiſſion ſhould be paid to the council of Chalcedon: by a law

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which he paſſed, heretics were excluded from holding offices, and even from ſerving in the army; he reconciled the Greek and Roman churches, which had been ſeparated thirty four years, that is from the time that Acacius had been condemned by pope Felix. Pope Hormiſdas cauſed the names of the patriarchs Euphemius and Macedonius, who were zealous Catholics, to be blotted out of the *dyptics*, becauſe they were accuſed of being unwilling to blacken the character of their predeceſſor Acacius.

Law againſt heretics, Jews, &c. They were excluded even from ſerving in the army.

By a new edict the Manicheans were condemned to be baniſhed; and it declared, that if any of them were afterwards diſcovered, their heads ſhould be cut off. He likewiſe confirmed the abovementioned law againſt heretics in general, in which Pagans, Jews and Samaritans were included; without once recollecting that their aſſiſtance might become neceſſary. About that time a Saracen, who was a Chriſtian, ſaid to a prince of his country, who perſecuted the Chriſtians—*Conſider that we were Chriſtians before we were your ſubjects. I do not know a power ſufficiently ſtrong to compel me to believe what I do not believe, nor to diſguiſe what I do believe; and if we muſt come to blows, my ſword is as long as another.* This bold reply ſhews to what ſovereigns expoſe themſelves by committing acts of violence, which even Conſtantine prudently avoided.

Extraordinary expreſſion of a Saracen.

524. Theodoric complains of the perſecutions.

Though Juſtin made an exception in his edict in favour of the Goths, whom he certainly dreaded, Theodoric was provoked at the Arians being refuſed the ſame indulgence which he granted to the Catholics. He wrote letters to the emperour, in which he repreſented in the ſtrongeſt terms, that princes have no authority over the minds of men; that their privileges do not extend beyond the government in civil matters; that they have no right to puniſh any but the diſturbers of the public peace. Juſtin replied, that without reſtraining conſciences he might employ whom he thought proper for his ſervice; that an uniform mode of worſhip was neceſſary for preſerving good order; and therefore

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he had a right to exclude from the churches all who were of a different perſuaſion from himſelf.

He ſends pope John to threaten Juſtin.

Theodoric ſent for pope John to Ravenna, and from thence ordered him to proceed to Conſtantinople and declare to Juſtin, that if the Arians were not reſtored to the poſſeſſion of their churches and the entire freedom of their religion, repriſals ſhould be made upon the Catholics in Italy. Though the commiſſion was diſagreeable to the pope, he ſeemed to obey; but on his arrival at Conſtantinople, where he was received with every mark of reſpect, (he was the firſt Roman pontiff they had ſeen) he employed his time in attending to the prerogatives of his ſee; and, ſo far from reſtoring their churches to the Arians, conſecrated them for the Catholics. At his return he was impriſoned by Theodoric, and, dying in confinement, was honoured as a martyr. According to Fleury's account, he diſcharged the commiſſion faithfully—"For, by repreſenting the "danger to which Italy was expoſed, he procured what "he aſked from Juſtin; that is to ſay, the Arians were "to have their liberty." *Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. l.* 32. This account does not ſeem exact. *V. l'Abrégé chronol. de l'Hiſt. d' Italie.*

The pope executes his commiſſion unfaithfully, and is puniſhed for it.

Theodoric becomes jealous of the Catholics.

Theodoric, who was ſixty eight years of age, was offended with the murmurs of the Catholics during the negotiation at Conſtantinople; and, ſuſpecting that plots were forming againſt him, became jealous and a dupe to calumny. Albinus the patrician was accuſed of holding a treaſonable correſpondence with the emperour. Boetius, a philoſopher equally illuſtrious for his rank and the tenor of his life, having no doubt of the patrician's innocence, openly ſaid—*If Albinus be guilty, I am ſo, and the whole ſenate.* The enemies of the philoſopher took care to conſtrue the expreſſion into treaſon: they ſuborned three witneſſes, who gave evidence againſt him; and while he was in priſon he compoſed a pious work in which Theodoric was ſometimes abuſed: it is entitled, *De conſolatione philoſoph.* The conduct of pope John increaſed the king's ſuſpicions. Boetius and his father in law Symmachus were put to death.

Boetius and Symmachus put to death.

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It is not to be doubted that Theodoric thought them guilty: but his heart was wrung with remorſe; and ſinking into a deep melancholy, he died at ſeventy four years of age, and was ſucceeded by his grandſon Athalaric, the ſon of his daughter Amalaſonté. He was an infant; but his mother, a learned, virtuous and enlightened princeſs, capable of buſineſs, and equally deſerving love and reſpect, ſhewed herſelf not inferiour to the taſk of governing; and, while ſhe held the reins, the people were not ſenſible of the loſs of Theodoric. She was particularly attentive to the education of her ſon.—*It is the love of learning and of thoſe who cultivate and teach it*, ſaid ſhe, *which diſtinguiſhes the civilized from the barbarous nations.*

526. Death of Theodoric. His daughter Amalaſonté.

That we might avoid mixing things totally unconnected, we delayed to mention a few important events which occurred during the reign of Juſtin. Zathius, king of the Lazi in ancient Colchis, came to get himſelf crowned at Conſtantinople, though Cabades the king of Perſia claimed the right of ſovereignty over him, and was upon the point of commencing a war upon that ſubject, but changing his intention, he ſolicited the emperour to adopt his third ſon Choſroes, whom he intended for his ſucceſſor. This extraordinary propoſal gave juſt cauſe of diſquiet, as the people were afraid that a Perſian might one day ſucceed to the empire; he was therefore told, that cuſtom did not admit of foreigners being adopted except by arms, which was a ceremony that did not confer a right of ſucceſſion. Choſroes was on his way to Conſtantinople, when the Perſians, provoked with this unexpected anſwer, immediately commenced hoſtilities by ſeizing Iberia to the eaſt of Lazica, which had been placed by its king under the protection of Juſtin, who died during theſe tranſactions in the year 527.

Cabades wants Juſtin to adopt his ſon Choſroes. The refuſal of the emperour occaſions a war. Death of Juſtin.

He had a little before declared Juſtinian his nephew Auguſtus, who after having ſworn fraternal affection to Vitalian, aſſaſſinated him in the beginning of this reign. The emperour, by his partiality for the blue faction, inſpired

Juſtinian, his nephew, declared Auguſtus.

inſpired him with audacity to inſult the laws, to commit the moſt enormous crimes in open day, and even to ſport with aſſaſſinations. From theſe early actions of Juſtinian, nothing was leſs to be expected than that he ſhould prove a wiſe legiſlator; however, he has been greatly celebrated for his laws; and, if we may uſe the expreſſion, he would have been deified by the encomiums of enthuſiaſtic civilians, if there had not been frequent inſtances of weakneſs, imprudence, injuſtice and tyranny, viſible both in his laws and government. In the ſequel the Roman grandeur will ſeem to riſe from its ruins; we ſhall ſee two generals revive it by their victories; but theſe are only like the laſt ſtruggles of a dying man, who ſoon ſinks again without life, exhauſted by his efforts as by a long decay.

JUSTINIAN.

CHAP. I.

Till Africa was reconquered from the Vandals.

527. Good and bad qualities of Juſtinian.

JUSTINIAN was probably of as low birth as his uncle, but had the ſuperiour advantage of education. On his acceſſion to the empire he was forty years of age, was well ſkilled in juriſprudence, fond of ſtudy and application, and deſirous of reforming abuſes; but a ſlave to prejudice, prone to deſpotiſm, weak and unſteady, vain, unacquainted with true glory, more eager to dictate to the opinions than to effect the happineſs of his ſubjects: he was one of thoſe princes whoſe characters are a ſtrange mixture of good and evil, and who, without being really great, appear ſo from the great actions performed by their miniſters and generals. The littleneſs of Juſtinian's mind, and the faults of his government, will ſometimes appear, notwithſtanding the ſplendid ſucceſs of his enterpriſes.

Would

His disgraceful marriage with Theodora.

Would a prince of ſuperiour abilities marry an actreſs, ſtained with vices, and of a character equally imperious and infamous? Yet this Juſtinian did for Theodora, *the moſt reſpectable ſpouſe whom God had given him*, as he ſtyles her in one of his laws. Juſtin had left in the treaſury 120,000 pounds weight of gold, which was ſoon diſſipated by the profuſion of his ſucceſſor.

Diſſipation of the revenue.

Violent zeal of Juſtinian.

He piqued himſelf on his ſkill in theology, which was an additional misfortune to the ſtate. Nor does the zeal he ſhewed in the beginning of his reign for the extirpation of hereſy merit commendation, as in his latter days he degenerated from the true faith and perſecuted the orthodox. In him a jealous predilection for his own opinion prevailed over the love of truth. To the laws of his predeceſſors he added one which made it capital not to conform to the eſtabliſhed doctrines. Pagans, Jews and Heretics fled from his dominions with curſes; others, tranſported with more violent rage, laid violent hands on themſelves; ſome Montaniſts in Phrygia ſet fire to their churches, and conſumed themſelves in the flames; the Samaritans revolted to the number of fifty thouſand, pillaging and maſſacring wherever they went, till they were maſſacred themſelves. The fruits of theſe perſecutions were the depopulation of the provinces, deteſtation of the emperour's perſon, and hatred againſt Chriſtianity.

Evils produced by it.

Theſe partly cauſed by his avidity

By confiſcating to his own uſe the property of thoſe who refuſed to cauſe themſelves and families to be baptized, Juſtinian gave room to believe that he had his own intereſt as much at heart as the propagation of the Chriſtian faith.

Goths maſſacred in a church.

The Goths alone (for Theodoric was not yet forgotten) were exempted from the rigour of thoſe laws. The emperour even rebuilt a church for the Arians; but the firſt time that they aſſembled in it, they were attacked and the greateſt part of them murdered by a troop of fanatics, who were but too much encouraged by the emperour's conduct.

At

Severe laws for the reformation of manners.

At the ſame time his ſeverity was exerciſed againſt tranſgreſſions of the rules of morality, but in a manner leſs proper to work a reformation than to raiſe ſcandal. Two biſhops, ſeveral prieſts and ſenators, being convicted of monſtrous debaucheries, were mutilated in the public ſquare. This example proving ineffectual, the emperour long after, in 554, by a law publiſhed in Lent, threatened with the moſt rigorous puniſhment all who were guilty unleſs they did penance at Eaſter: but how could he reckon upon ſuch penance? He puniſhed blaſphemy as ſeverely as the crime againſt nature, and prohibited games of chance as a temptation to blaſphemy. He baniſhed thoſe who made a trade of proſtitution, and declared it capital in future. A prudent legiſlator would firſt have conſidered whether all theſe laws were practicable; if they were capable of reforming the manners of a corrupted nation; if the remedies applied were ſuited to the diſorders; and would have dreaded doing miſchief while he was endeavouring to do good. In fact the diſorders grew ſtill more flagrant and numerous.

War with Perſia.

Mean time the war with Perſia giving the emperour no ſmall uneaſineſs, though the Romans had gained ſome advantages over the enemy, he ſent ambaſſadours to Cabades with preſents and propoſals for an accommodation; but received in return a haughty letter in which that monarch ſtyled himſelf *King of Kings, Son of the Sun, Sovereign of the Eaſt*; while he gave Juſtinian only thoſe of *Son of the Moon, and Sovereign of the Weſt*. In 530, Beliſarius, already diſtinguiſhed by his abilities and courage, defeated the Perſians near Dara. But the following year he loſt the battle of Callinicum on Eaſter eve. As the troops had been weakened by the faſt, and he had it in his power to repulſe the enemy without running any riſk, he was deſirous of avoiding an engagement; but was obliged to give way to the raſh ardour of his ſoldiers, who exclaimed againſt his prudent caution as want of courage, and were ready to break out into open mutiny. Thus the Perſians had the glo-

Beliſarius beaten at Callinicum, by the fault of his ſoldiers.

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ry of vanquiſhing an army much ſuperiour to their own, and commanded by the beſt general of the empire. Beliſarius was recalled, and being too virtuous to play the mean flatterer, was deſtined more than once to feel by experience, that great ſervices and triumphs are the ready way to diſgrace in a court governed by intrigue.

He is recalled.

The Roman arms being ſucceſsful in Armenia and other parts, Cabades died through grief for his loſſes. But his ſucceſſor Choſroes was very capable of repairing them. This prince, who is maliciouſly decried by the Greeks, but extolled by the Orientals above Cyrus himſelf, ſoon gave proofs of his heroic ſentiments; and Juſtinian having renewed the negotiations, he declared that he would not lay down his arms except upon condition of receiving eleven thouſand pounds weight of gold, with certain fortreſſes, and that the commander of the troops in Meſopotamia, inſtead of reſiding in that province, ſhould remain at Conſtantinople. The emperour, after agreeing to every thing, retracted and ſent a counter order, but was in the end obliged in 533 to conclude a treaty on the moſt humiliating terms.

531. Choſroes ſucceeds Cabades.

Terms he impoſed on Juſtinian.

Through his whole reign he was ſo imprudent as to foment the factions of the circus by ſiding with the blue in oppoſition to the green, which was favoured by the empreſs Theodora. Theſe two had abſorbed all the other factions, and divided the whole city of Conſtantinople; and their quarrels, which were conſtantly attended with bloodſhed, at laſt produced one of the moſt dreadful ſeditions that had ever been known. One day, during the Circenſian games, the green faction, irritated againſt the emperour, offered him the groſſeſt inſults; and the rage of the populace was inflamed by the execution of their ringleaders. The mutineers demanded four odious miniſters to be given up to them; and among the reſt Tribonian, who made a ſale of juſtice, and was afterwards the inſtrument of legiſlation. Juſtinian removed thoſe miniſters; and, finding that this mean ſpirited compliance did not diſarm the unbridled multitude, was preparing to eſcape their rage by flight,

532. Rebellion of the green faction.

The emperour yields, & is ſtruck with a panic.

flight, but was prevented by the more courageous Theodora.—*It is not neceſſary you ſhould live*, ſaid ſhe; *but it is abſolutely neceſſary not to ſurvive your honour. A ſovereign, lingering out a ſhameful exiſtence in exile, is more worthleſs than a dead carcaſe. The moſt glorious ſepulchre is a throne.* This woman, who is ſo much decried, at leaſt in ſome degree poſſeſſed an elevation of ſoul.

His ſingular humiliation.

A report being ſpread that the emperour and his wife were fled, the populace haſtened to the houſe of Hypatius, Anaſtaſius's nephew, and, forcing him along with them, proclaimed him Auguſtus, when Juſtinian ſuddenly appeared with the book of the goſpels in his hand, acknowledged himſelf guilty, declared that this calamity had been cauſed by his own ſins, and that he pardoned the offence, at the ſame time offering indemnity to all, without exception, if they would return to their duty. But their hatred was now heightened by contempt, and he was obliged to ſhelter himſelf from violence by a ſpeedy retreat into his palace.

Beliſarius quells the mutineers.

Maſſacre.

All hope was loſt, had not Beliſarius, followed by the principal officers with their ſoldiers, briſkly charged the mutineers. The maſſacre was dreadful; thirty thouſand men loſt their lives, and the horrours of the day were completed by a conflagration. Hypatius and his brother Pompey were ſtrangled in priſon, and the emperour cauſed the news of his victory to be publiſhed in every quarter of the empire. What a deplorable ſubject of vanity!

CHAP. II.

Conqueſt of Africa by Beliſarius.

The Vandals enervated in Africa.

THOUGH Juſtinian made the follies of the circus a matter of ſerious attention, and eſcaped falling their victim only by the maſſacre of his ſubjects, yet, becauſe chance had placed ſome great men about him, very important enterpriſes were begun and execut-

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ed in his reign. The conqueſt of Africa was the work of Beliſarius. From the time of Genſeric the Vandals had totally degenerated. They were no more thoſe intrepid heroes, indefatigable, ſober, and chaſte, who iſſuing from the north cruſhed all oppoſition; but a nation enervated in a rich and burning climate, where luxury and riches ſpread every allurement of debauchery.

Errours committed by Genſeric followed by diſcords.

Two faults committed by Genſeric had expoſed them to a revolution the moment that their manners degenerated. He had diſmantled all the ſtrong places except Carthage, that, in caſe of a war, the Romans might not find means to ſecure a footing in the country. He had made it a law that the crown ſhould always devolve to the eldeſt of his family, without regard to the primogeniture of the branches; which was opening a way for confuſion and the moſt horrid crimes: accordingly his vaſt dominions, which comprehended Corſica and Sardinia, with all the countries from the ſtreights of Gades to Cyrenaica, were after his death a theatre of diviſions and diſcord.

Gelimer the uſurper.

Huneric, who ſucceeded him, maſſacred his own brothers and nephews in order to ſecure the crown to his ſon, Hilderic, who mounted the throne after him, but was depoſed by Gelimer, great grandſon of the conqueror. Juſtinian, who had been in alliance with Hilderic, wrote in his favour to Gelimer, but his advices and threats were treated with contempt. Upon this the emperour haſtened the concluſion of the treaty with Perſia, and reſolved to carry the war into Africa, the conduct of which was committed to Beliſarius.

533. Conqueſt of Africa by Beliſarius.

This illuſtrious general embarked in the month of June, at the head of an army which conſiſted only of ten thouſand foot, and ſix thouſand horſe; and landed in Africa in the third month after his departure. The exact diſcipline which he maintained in his army made him be looked upon rather as a deliverer than enemy; he therefore advanced near Carthage, without meeting almoſt any reſiſtance: at laſt he encountered Gelimer,

whom he totally routed, and next day marched up to the gates of the city, the ſtreets of which were illuminated for his reception; but, being apprehenſive that the licentiouſneſs of his troops would be favoured by the darkneſs, he encamped without the walls, and the day following made his entry as if into a city of the empire, without tumult, violence, or even an interruption of commerce. Carthage had been under the dominion of the Vandals fourſcore and fifteen years.

Gelimer ſends ambaſſadours into Spain.

Gelimer had ſent into Spain to requeſt aſſiſtance from Theudis, king of the Viſigoths; and his ambaſſadours, who knew nothing of what had paſſed, confidently affirmed that he was on the point of cruſhing the Romans, who were only a handful of banditti: but Theudis, who was better informed, bid them return to Carthage and examine into the ſtate of affairs. Being diſmiſſed with this anſwer, they arrived in the harbour of that city, where they had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of meeting with enemies; and were conducted to Beliſarius, who ſuffered them to depart on their revealing the ſecret of their commiſſion.

All his efforts unſucceſsful.

Mean time the Vandal monarch collected a new army, while his emiſſaries attempted to corrupt the Huns in the Roman ſervice, who, diſcontented with the ſtrictneſs of the diſcipline, and apprehenſive of being detained in Africa, promiſed to revolt upon the firſt opportunity: but the general, having diſcovered the plot, regained the affection of thoſe barbarians by loading them with careſſes, and diſtributing among them a quantity of wine; when they acknowledged their treachery, and promiſed to make amends for it by their future behaviour. At Tricamara he defeated an army of ten times his own number, for it conſiſted of a hundred thouſand men; and Gelimer fled to an inacceſſible mountain in the remoteſt part of Numidia, where, reduced to a ſavage life (for the country produced only barley and rye, which the Moors had neither ſkill to grind nor bake) after ſuffering the ſevereſt hardſhips for three months, he found himſelf obliged to ſurrender. Beliſarius received

He is obliged to ſurrender.

him

him at Carthage, where he cauſed him to be detained till Juſtinian's pleaſure was known.

534. Beliſarius imprudently ſuſpected.

Had the emperour's conduct been guided by prudence, he would have perceived that it was abſolutely neceſſary the great man who in three months had annihilated the power of the Vandals ſhould be continued in his command in order to ſecure his conqueſt. But at Conſtantinople envy had wakeful eyes. Even ſome of the hero's officers ſuffered themſelves to be made tools of the malice of the courtiers, and he was accuſed of a deſign to revolt. Being informed of this charge, and Juſtinian having left it to his choice either to ſtay in Africa or return, he immediately ſet out in order to refute the calumny.

A triumph decreed him.

A triumph was decreed him, an honour which till then had never been granted in the Eaſt, and Gelimer followed his chariot at the head of the priſoners: that unhappy prince often repeating thoſe words ſo well adapted to his misfortunes—*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity*. After the triumph, Juſtinian aſſigned him ſome lands in Galatia, where he paſſed the remainder of his days.

Mal-adminiſtration of Africa.

The moment that Beliſarius embarked, the Moors raiſed an inſurrection; and tranquillity was not reſtored by his ſucceſſors till after a war of fourteen years. Africa, the number of whoſe inhabitants was prodigiouſly diminiſhed, remained ſubject to the empire till the invaſion of the Saracens, that is about a hundred years; and even the name of the Vandals was forever obliterated in that country. It was divided by Juſtinian into ſeven provinces, Tingitana, Mauritania, Numidia, the province of Carthage, Byzacene, Tripolitana, and Sardinia, that iſland having made part of the Vandal territories. He treated the Arians in his new dominions as he every where treated the heretics: and though at firſt he affected a mild government, the people were ſoon ruined by the collectors of the revenue.

Choſroes braves the emperour.

Choſroes ſent him an embaſſy of congratulation, or rather to brave him by demanding a ſhare of the booty

—*For*, ſaid he, *had it not been for the peace with the Perſians, the Romans would not have been able to conquer the Vandals*: and magnificent preſents were ſent him, in order to prevent a rupture.

Pomp and profuſion of Theodora.

The riches of which Genſeric had plundered Rome would have been of great uſe to the emperour, had he employed them for the public benefit. But the expenſes of Theodora alone ſwallowed up immenſe treaſures. In her journey to the baths of Bythinia ſhe was attended by a train of four thouſand men. She was laviſh in her donations to churches and monaſteries, while ſhe inſulted religion by her crimes: nor was her huſband's piety much more rational. Let us here in general obſerve an important truth, the proofs of which occur every moment. That true piety which enlightens and elevates the ſoul, neceſſarily produces effects equally beneficial and noble; but on the contrary, ſuperſtition, when ſubſtituted in its place, debaſes, tortures, or depraves human nature: its yoke is heavy, and ſometimes drags blind but innocent victims to the grave: the perverſe it hardens, by teaching them that the want of virtue may be compenſated by outward obſervances; or at leaſt it places the greateſt merit in what is of no eſtimation when put in the balance with the duties of life.

Miſtaken piety.

CHAP. III.

Firſt Expedition of Beliſarius into Italy.

Cabals formed againſt Amalaſonté in Italy.

IT is a kind of prodigy to ſee important enterpriſes executed under a weak government; but ſo favourable were the conjunctures, that the conqueſt of Africa was quickly followed by that of Italy. Amalaſonté, mother of Athalaric, who, under the title of queen (which ſhe aſſumed during her regency) governed his dominions with admirable prudence, had the mortification of ſeeing that young prince hurried into vice by the arts of his courtiers; and they even formed a deſign

to

to deprive her of the royalty, of which ſhe made too good an uſe not to draw upon her their hatred: but ſhe broke their deſign, and put to death the chiefs of the cabal, after having received Juſtinian's word that, in caſe of neceſſity, ſhe ſhould find an aſylum at Conſtantinople.

She is put to death by Theodatus, whom ſhe had raiſed to the throne.

This princeſs had a more dangerous enemy in Theodatus, nephew of her father Theodoric, and governour of Tuſcany, whoſe extortions ſhe had reſtrained and puniſhed. Tranſported with rage at this imagined injury, he privately engaged to put Tuſcany into the hands of the emperour, on condition of receiving a ſum of money and the dignity of ſenator in Conſtantinople. In the mean time Athalaric died, exhauſted by his debaucheries; and Amalaſonté, flattering herſelf that Theodatus, the only ſurvivor of the royal family, might be attached to her by motives of gratitude, procured him the crown, though ſhe ſtill kept the authority in her own hands. He readily took an oath to comply in every thing with her pleaſure; but ſoon after ſhut her up in a fortreſs, where ſhe was ſtrangled. Caſſiodorus, who continued in office under this prince, ſpeaks of him with admiration. Perhaps that old miniſter, being naturally of a declamatory turn, was charmed with his affectation of Platoniſm and a few acts of ſeeming juſtice. After all, is it ſurpriſing that a writer, in other reſpects eſtimable, ſhould after long reſidence at court ſometimes aſſume the tone of a flatterer?

That prince praiſed by Caſſiodorus.

535. Enterpriſe of Juſtinian againſt Italy.

Juſtinian eagerly embraced the pretence furniſhed him by the death of Amalaſonté for executing his deſigns upon Italy. Beliſarius ſeized upon Sicily, while Mondonus, another general of diſtinction, invaded Dalmatia and made himſelf maſter of Salone; upon which the timid Theodatus offered to abdicate the kingdom on condition of receiving lands to the value of twelve hundred pounds weight of gold yearly rent, and even ſent pope Agapetus II. to Conſtantinople in order to ſolicit a peace. But Mondonus having been overpowered by

by numbers and ſlain, he retracted his engagements, and haſtened his ruin.

536. The Goths elect Vitiges in the room of Theodatus.

Beliſarius took Naples by ſtorm, after a bloody ſiege of twenty days; and the Goths, filled with indignation againſt their king for not marching to its relief, proclaimed Vitiges, an officer of tried valour. Theodatus endeavoured to eſcape by flight, but was overtaken and murdered; and Vitiges, having received the oath of allegiance from pope Silverius, the ſenate and the people of Rome, ſet out for Ravenna to aſſemble an army.

Beliſarius maſter of Rome.

In a ſhort time Beliſarius preſented himſelf at the gates of Rome; and the inhabitants, by advice of the pope, who exhorted them not to expoſe themſelves imprudently to danger, ſurrendered without ſtanding an attack. Thus was Rome reſtored to the empire threeſcore years after it had been loſt.

537. He ſupports a memorable ſiege.

With five thouſand men Beliſarius undertook to defend that immenſe city againſt an army of more than a hundred thouſand Oſtrogoths. He truſted to the valour and diſcipline of his troops: he had gained all his victories with ſmall armies; and beſides, the enemy being acquainted only with field ſervice, in their ſieges probably employed Italian engineers, who certainly were far from being zealous in their cauſe. This ſiege, which is one of the moſt remarkable in hiſtory, laſted a year and nine days. Procopius has given an intereſting account of it with ſome particulars which have a tincture of the marvellous. Vitiges having ſecured Porto at the mouth of the Tiber, which was unprovided with a garriſon, the beſieged were extremely preſſed for want of proviſions; but an infectious diſtemper having broken out in the camp of the beſiegers, and Beliſarius having received ſome reinforcements, a truce was agreed upon for three months, which however was kept by neither party; and at laſt Vitiges, dreading that he ſhould loſe Ravenna by treachery, raiſed the ſiege.

Singular inſtance of devotion.

We ſhall here mention a circumſtance expreſſive of the manners and opinions of the age. Beliſarius, deſigning to repair a breach in the walls oppoſite to St. Peter's

Peter's church, was prevented by the Romans, who aſſured him that St. Peter had promiſed to defend it. The Oſtrogoths, who notwithſtanding their Arianiſm had fervent ſentiments of piety, made no attack upon that quarter; and the miracle appeared ſo unqueſtionable, that it was long made a point of religion not to rebuild the wall.

Deſpotiſm of Juſtinian in theological matters.

While the generals were employed in making vaſt conqueſts, the emperour's vanity rather than his zeal was employed in religious matters. He wrote ſeveral books of theology; he decided as dogmatically as a doctor of the church, and his abſolute power gave weight to his determinations.—*Be of my opinion*, ſaid he one day to pope Agapetus, *or I will baniſh you to the extremities of the empire*. The greateſt part of the biſhops conformed the more readily to his ſentiments as he increaſed their authority over the people.

He grants the biſhops a court.

It was he who firſt eſtabliſhed a biſhop's court, as is obſerved by Mr. Le Beau; but he gave it no compulſory power. By his regulation, in all civil cauſes, clerks and monks were in the firſt inſtance to be ſummoned before the biſhop; in criminal, either before the biſhop or a ſecular judge; the ſentence of a ſecular judge againſt a clerk could not be executed without leave of the biſhop; in caſe of refuſal, the matter was to be laid before the prince. Biſhops and nuns were in no caſe amenable before ſecular courts.

Stately church of St Sophia.

Had he not exhauſted the treaſury in building the ſtately church of St. Sophia, that edifice would have been a more glorious monument to his memory. When it was conſecrated, joining his own praiſes to thoſe of the Deity, he exclaimed, *Solomon, I have outdone thee*. The cupola was new covered with long ſlabs of marble without wood work, in order to prevent fires. (This church had been burned during the ſedition in 532.) The ſanctuary was plated with ſilver, the weight of which is ſaid to have amounted to forty thouſand pounds. The altar, which ſhone with jewels, was ſupported by four pillars of maſſy gold. Such immenſe

menſe treaſures were deſtined one day to become a prey to the Turks, and that ſtately cathedral to be converted into a moſque. Juſtinian had fixed the number of clerks in the cathedral of St. Sophia to four hundred and eighty five, beſides forty deaconeſſes; but they were afterwards increaſed to eight hundred. What enormous ſums muſt their maintenance have coſt!

539. Beliſarius beſieges Ravenna.

As it is inconſiſtent with our plan to enter into the particulars of a war, we ſhall rapidly follow Beliſarius to the concluſion of his expedition into Italy, where he at laſt laid ſiege to Ravenna, into which Vitiges had thrown himſelf with the remains of his forces. The Francs offered that prince an army of five hundred thouſand men, on condition of his ceding to them part of his dominions; but as he had found them treacherous on another occaſion, he choſe rather to treat with the Romans. The emperour conſented that Vitiges ſhould keep the whole territory beyond the Po; but Beliſarius, being already maſter of that country, and on the point of reducing all Italy to his obedience, refuſed to ſign the treaty.

He refuſes royalty.

In the mean time a fire broke out in the magazines of Ravenna; and the Goths, apprehenſive of periſhing by a famine, privately made an offer of the crown to Beliſarius; ſuch was the admiration with which he had inſpired them. But he replied, I am a ſubject of the emperour, and cannot accept ſuch an offer without his conſent. Vitiges, being informed of this ſtep taken by the Goths, offered to abdicate in his favour; and that great general ſeized the opportunity of putting an end to the war. Without explaining himſelf any further, he promiſed the enemy entire ſecurity for their lives and properties; and it being concluded that he would certainly accept the crown, he was received into the city. At laſt his ſecret views were diſcovered. He kept his word, and treated the Goths with the ſame kindneſs as the Romans, but, by an unjuſtifiable policy, ſecured the perſon of the king, and ſent him to Conſtantinople, to which he himſelf was

He ſecures the perſon of Vitiges.

recalled

recalled by the emperour from motives of jealouſy, excited by the malignity of the courtiers, though under pretence of giving him the command of the army againſt Choſroes, who was preparing to commence hoſtilities. Vitiges was made a patrician.

Magnanimity of the Roman general.

Nothing could have been more eaſy for Beliſarius than to make himſelf king of Italy. Ildibald, whom the Oſtrogoths inveſted with that dignity (for they preſerved Pavia and Verona) again ſolicited him to accept it; but he refuſed it anew, being incapable of betraying, even for a kingdom, a prince ever open to ſuſpicion, and whoſe ingratitude he had reaſon to dread. In him every thing was heroic; his magnanimity, his virtues, even exceeded his military talents. A nation would have been happy in having him for a maſter, ſince even thoſe enemies who had ſo frequently been vanquiſhed by his arms were deſirous of living under his government. The peaſants were ſecure in their fields while he made monarchs tremble. *An army*, ſaid he, *ought to protect, not to ravage, the country.* In an age of meanneſs he ſeemed to revive the heroes of ancient Rome.

His beneficence & virtues.

Intrigues againſt him.

But worthleſs intriguers had more credit at court; and the better ſervice he did the ſtate the more inveterate were they againſt him. We ſhall ſee them one day triumph over this great man. Such is often the unhappineſs of princes, who by the inſidious arts of ſome jealous and craving miſcreants round them, whom they imagine attached to their perſon, while their fortune only is the object, are blinded to merit, and rendered ſuſpicious even of virtue. But did not the ſervices of Beliſarius ſpeak for him? Had not his fidelity undergone ſufficiently numerous and diſtinguiſhed trials? And had Juſtinian been endowed with a great ſoul and a juſt underſtanding, could he not have diſcerned between the arts of intrigue, and the noble conduct of heroic zeal? We ſhall always find him employing Beliſarius in caſes of neceſſity; always truſting him, and always recompenſing his ſervices with diſgrace.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

War with Perſia.—The Empire of the Goths re-eſtabliſhed in Italy by Totila.

Weakneſs of the empire.

JUSTINIAN repaired or built a vaſt number of cities and fortreſſes, by which he exhauſted the revenue without augmenting the real ſtrength of his empire; as no fortifications could ſupply the want of diſcipline, courage, and public ſpirit. When the armies ceaſed to be commanded by generals of uncommon abilities, every thing felt ſymptoms of decay. After the departure of Beliſarius, the Goths, as we ſhall ſee elſewhere, again grew formidable, while Choſroes ſpread terrour through the Eaſt.

540. Choſroes invades Syria, and takes Antioch.

That warlike prince, who was filled with uneaſineſs at the ſucceſs of Juſtinian's arms, notwithſtanding that emperour's earneſt deſire to keep upon good terms with him, renewed the war; and having invaded Syria, and taken without reſiſtance the ſtrong cities of Hierapolis and Beræa, now Aleppo, laid ſiege to Antioch, the rival of Rome and Conſtantinople, which he entered by eſcalade, and reduced to aſhes, after abandoning it to be pillaged by his army, becauſe the inhabitants had inſulted him from their walls.

The Romans made tributaries.

Juſtinian having ſent ambaſſadours with new propoſals of peace, who began with repreſenting to him the injuſtice of that war which had been undertaken in violation of the treaties, he replied, that the emperour had been the firſt aggreſſor, and proved it by letters written to the barbarians to ſtir them up againſt the Perſians, concluding with requiring ſo much money down, and a certain ſum annually. Upon this the ambaſſadours exclaiming—*What! ſhall the Romans be tributaries to the Perſians? No*, replied Choſroes; *you ſhall pay us a ſubſidy, as you do to the Huns and Saracens, for the defence of your frontiers*; and at laſt it was ſtipulated that he ſhould immediately be paid five thouſand pounds weight of gold, beſides five hundred every year. Scarce

Progreſs of the Perſians ſtopped by Beliſarius.

Scarce was the treaty concluded, when it was violated by both parties; Beliſarius being ſent againſt the Perſians, and Choſroes, before he was attacked, having taken the ſtrong city of Petra, and deprived the Romans of the whole territory of Lazica, the inhabitants of which, oppreſſed by the avarice of a Roman governour, had invited him to deliver them from tyranny, and receive them as his ſubjects. Some time after, the king of Perſia attempting to invade Paleſtine, Beliſarius, though he had almoſt no troops, by a ſtratagem made him believe that he was oppoſed by a powerful army; which ſo intimidated him, that he repaſſed the Euphrates. But that general was recalled for the war in Italy; and his ſucceſſor Martinus, at the head of thirty thouſand men, was put to flight by four thouſand Perſians. Thus, where Beliſarius did not command, the empire met with nothing but loſs and diſgraces.

He is recalled, and the Perſians are victorious.

Italy oppreſſed by the Romans.

Italy was on the point of being diſmembered from the empire. The generals thought more of pillaging than defending it. A logotheros, or ſuperintendant of the finances, whom Juſtinian had ſent in quality of governour, having diſguſted the people and the army by all the oppreſſions of a knaviſh and unfeeling tax gatherer, Ildibald, king of the Oſtrogoths, whoſe whole force conſiſted at firſt only of a thouſand men, ſoon formed a numerous army, and made himſelf maſter of all the country on the north of the Po; but being guilty of ſome acts of injuſtice was aſſaſſinated, as was his ſucceſſor Evaric, who was deemed unworthy of the throne.

Totila revives the hopes of the Goths.

The hopes of the nation were revived by Totila, nephew of Ildibald, a prince comparable to Theodoric, who was proclaimed in 541. He defeated the Romans at Faenza, and afterwards at Marcello, near Florence; upon which occaſions he treated the priſoners with ſuch humanity, that they became his faithful ſubjects. His ſucceſs filled even Rome and Ravenna with alarms; and Lucania, Apulia, Calabria, and even Naples, were ſoon in his power. The Italian troops, not receiving their pay, ſubſiſted by rapine, and diſregarded the orders

ders of their generals, while thoſe of Totila obſerved exact diſcipline. That hero, ſo mild to the conquered, could never be prevailed upon to pardon a ſoldier who had raviſhed the daughter of a Roman, though one of the braveſt men in the army.—*That any of my ſubjects ſhould be unhappy*, ſaid he, *fills me with the moſt heart piercing ſorrow; but I myſelf ſhould be the author of their greateſt calamities, did I leave crimes unpuniſhed.* Such ought to have been the ſentiments and practice of the emperours.

His zeal for juſtice.

544. Juſtinian ſends Beliſarius into Italy with ſcarce any troops.

While affairs were in this unproſperous ſituation, the generals informed Juſtinian that Italy would be loſt if ſuccours were not very ſpeedily ſent; upon which Beliſarius was diſpatched for that country, but with ſo few troops that the brave general was obliged to ſhut himſelf up in Ravenna. In the mean time Rome was beſieged by Totila; and the Goths having made themſelves maſters of a fleet loaded with proviſions from Sicily, the inhabitants were reduced by famine to deſpair; while two rapacious commanders, far from endeavouring to relieve their miſery, took a cruel advantage of it, by ſelling at an exceſſive price the corn which they concealed in ſubterraneous vaults. A buſhel of wheat was ſold for ſeven *aurei* (about 5l. 12s. 10d. $\frac{1}{2}$). In vain did Beliſarius, who had received ſome reinforcements, attempt to throw a convoy into Rome. His orders were badly executed, and it fell into the hands of the enemy before it reached the city.

546. Totila takes Rome, & ſpares the Romans.

Some Iſaurian deſerters having found means to make the Gothic monarch maſter of one of the gates, he entered the place, and the garriſon fled; upon which he gave ſtrict orders to ſpare the inhabitants; which were ſo well obſerved, that, except twenty ſix ſoldiers, and threeſcore other perſons, who were put to the ſword before the orders were given out, not a life was loſt. Totila then ſent for the ſenators, and reproached them with their treachery to a nation from which they had received ſo many obligations; contraſting the gentle government of Theodoric and Amalaſonté with their late oppreſſions.

You

His juſt reproaches

You have received the proper reward of your treachery and ingratitude, ſaid he to them; *a new maſter has cruſhed you under a load of taxes, notwithſtanding the horrours of war; and the collectors of his revenue have done you more miſchief than the enemy.* No reply could be made to this reproof; yet we ſhall find the Romans again deſirous to change their maſters, and again having reaſon to repent of it. Such is the blindneſs of nations.

He abandons the deſign of deſtroying it.

Totila had reſolved to deſtroy Rome, which he could not keep, as he had occaſion for his troops elſewhere; but was diverted from that deſign by Beliſarius, who repreſented to him by letter that he would ſully his renown by deſtroying the moſt magnificent city in the world.—*Men immortalize themſelves and ſerve ſociety by building cities*, ſaid the general in his letter; *but by deſtroying them declare themſelves enemies of their ſpecies, and incur eternal diſgrace.* The king thanked him for his advice, promiſed to profit by it, and quitted Rome after diſperſing its inhabitants. Soon after, Beliſarius took poſſeſſion of it; and, being attacked by the Goths, though the walls were in very bad repair, had the glory of defending it againſt Totila, all whoſe attacks he repulſed: but that prince defeated other generals, and took other places, particularly Perufia, which held out ſeven months.

Beliſarius re-enters, and defends it.

548. Being in want of ſuccours, he returns to Conſtantinople.

Beliſarius had quitted Italy, after having been five years left without aſſiſtance, a witneſs of the enemy's ſucceſs, and in no condition to maintain his former reputation. Juſtinian ruined the empire by uſeleſs buildings, and thought he did a great deal when he granted the general a handful of men. Bad officers, and troops without pay or proviſions, were oppoſed to a young, intrepid, prudent, active monarch, adored by his ſoldiers and ſubjects, and whoſe forces increaſed with his victories. Had not Beliſarius obtained leave to return to Conſtantinople, he ran the riſk of being in a ſhort time cruſhed by Totila.

Riches, which he has been reproach-

He carried with him great ſums, which he had raiſed by contribution in Italy; a ſtain of which it is impoſſible

ed with amaſſing. ble to clear his memory, unleſs we ſuppoſe, againſt all probability, that conſidering the extreme want in which he was left by Juſtinian, he thought himſelf obliged to accumulate money by every method for the ſervice of the prince.

Juſtinian and Totila court the alliance of the Francs

Twelve years before, the Goths had ceded to the Francs their poſſeſſions in Gaul, which extended from the Alps to the Rhone, and from the Mediterranean to the kingdom of the Burgundians; and Juſtinian, deſirous of attaching to himſelf that nation, which was already very powerful, under pretence that thoſe provinces of right belonged to him, confirmed by an authentic act the ceſſion made to the Francs. On the other hand, Totila, no leſs ſolicitous of bringing them over to his intereſt, demanded in marriage the daughter of Theodebert, king of Auſtraſia. But that prince replied—*That his daughter ought to have a king for her huſband; and that Totila was not king of Italy, becauſe he could not keep Rome.*

Theodebert in Italy.

Theodebert, having made himſelf maſter of the Alps, extended his conqueſts into Liguria and Venetia; but, incenſed at the emperour for aſſuming the title of *Conqueror of the Francs and Alemains*, made a treaty of partition with the Gothic monarch, and deſigned in perſon to carry the war into the Eaſt, when he was cut off in the middle of his enterpriſes by an untimely death.

549. Rome again taken by the Goths.

At laſt Totila, taking to heart the reproach of Theodebert, retook Rome, which he rebuilt, and new peopled; and afterwards invaded Sicily, from whence he returned with a rich booty. In the mean time Thrace was threatened by the Lombards, who were ſettled in Pannonia and Noricum; the Gepidæ, from Sirmium and Dacia, the Heruli, eſtabliſhed in Mæſia, and, above all, by the Sclavonians, who became formidable ſoon after the beginning of this reign. This numerous and fierce nation originally ſettled in the northern parts of Sarmatia, afterwards ſpread themſelves along the borders of the Palus Mæotis and the Viſtula; and, following the ſteps of the Vandals, had fixed their habitations be-

tween

tween that river and the Nieſter. The Antes, one of their moſt diſtinguiſhed tribes, who have been confounded with the Bulgarians, or with the Abares, had ſettled near the Danube.

The Sclavonians the moſt formidable.

Thoſe Sclavonians were men of great ſtature, robuſt, and indefatigable, who inhabited detached cottages; they deſpiſed agriculture, and were ſolely employed in war; extremely jealous of their liberty, and generouſly hoſpitable, notwithſtanding the fierceneſs of their diſpoſition. Their firſt incurſion into Thrace and Illyria was dreadful; and though their numbers were at that time very ſmall, they ſtruck ſo much terrour, and committed ſuch horrid ravages and cruelties, that Juſtinian ſent his nephew, Germanus, to oppoſe them. Awed by the reputation of that general, they retired; but Germanus (who was to have ſucceeded Beliſarius in Italy, and whoſe virtues had reſiſted the corruption of the court) dying ſuddenly, they repaſſed the Danube, defeated ſeveral generals, and advanced within a day's march of Conſtantinople; and though again obliged to retreat, yet this check only increaſed their fury.

551. Juſtinian purchaſes a truce with Choſroes.

To complete the misfortunes of the empire, the war with the Perſians, which had been ſuſpended by a truce of four years, was kindled anew in Lazica; and the Romans, who at firſt were victorious, loſing their advantages, Juſtinian again purchaſed a truce, the conditions of which were dictated by Choſroes. Inſtead of annual payments, the emperour at once diſcharged the whole ſum that was demanded for five years, to avoid the appearance of being ſubjected to a tribute. A piece of childiſh vanity, worthy of that prince's narrow genius. However, two monks made amends for this loſs, by bringing to Conſtantinople ſome ſilk worms eggs, with the ſecret of turning them to advantage. The price of ſilk was then exceſſive, and the Perſians enriched themſelves by that trade.

Silk worms brought from Perſia.

Complaints againſt the emperour.

The emperour's artifices were far from blinding the eyes of the public: the ſums which he paid to the enemies of the Roman name were looked upon as a diſ-

graceful

graceful tribute; and the people loudly complained that in the ſpace of eleven years and a half he had paid to Choſroes four thouſand ſix hundred pounds weight of gold, which were equivalent to an annual tribute of four hundred. In one word, he was charged with meanly purchaſing peace while the war was not diſcontinued.

He rejects Totila's offers.

His behaviour to the Goths was as intractable as his conduct to the Perſians was mean. Totila ſeveral times ſued for peace, and was as often refuſed; though that hero offered in the name of his nation to pay a tribute, to renounce all pretenſions to Sicily and Dalmatia, and to ſerve the emperour in all his wars; at the ſame time repreſenting, that part of Italy belonged to the Francs while the Goths contented themſelves with the remains of a country which was reduced to an entire deſert. In all probability he would have made Juſtinian repent his haughty refuſals, had not Narſes been ſent againſt him at the head of a ſtrong army.

CHAP. V.

Narſes wreſts Italy from the Goths.—Affair of the three Chapters.

Narſes ſent into Italy.

NARSES, great chamberlain and favourite of the emperour, was an eunuch, and unqueſtionably a perfect maſter in the myſtery of court intrigues, as he had raiſed himſelf from a ſtate of ſlavery to the ſummit of power; yet his merit and abilities were ſtill ſuperiour to his fortune. The choice of ſuch a commander can only be attributed to the influence of favour; for he was unacquainted with war; and thirteen years before, when he marched into Italy to reinforce Beliſarius, had, from an unpardonable pique, croſſed that general's operations.

The methods he took to enſure ſucceſs.

However, his nomination brought ſucceſs. Narſes affected unwillingneſs, that he might obtain all the ſupplies

ſupplies which he wanted. The treaſury was thrown open to him, and he levied one of the ſtrongeſt armies which the empire had for a long time ſet on foot. His ſhew of devotion, joined to uncommon ſagacity, a great ſhare of courage and prudence, and boundleſs generoſity, contributed to the ſucceſs of his enterpriſes. The ſoldiers thought him inſpired, and believed themſelves invincible under his command.

552. He defeats Totila, who dies of his wounds.

The Francs, who were maſters of Treviſo, Vicenza, and Padua, having refuſed him a paſſage, he took the road to Ravenna, paſſed near Rimini, without loſing time in laying ſiege to it, and directed his courſe towards Rome. Totila advancing againſt him, they came to an engagement in the plain of Lentagio, (in the dutchy of Urbino) where the Goths were routed; and their king, after fruitleſsly endeavouring to rally them, received a mortal wound from a lance, of which he died at Capra. A body of Lombards in the army of Narſes did him good ſervice upon this occaſion. But it was not then imagined that their nation would ſoon reign in Italy. The conqueror, after making himſelf maſter of Rome, laid ſiege to Cumæ, the ſtrongeſt town in the whole country.

553. Siege of Cumæ. Theia, Totila's ſucceſſor, killed in a battle.

The Goths had elected for their king Theia, a brave officer, who, though not poſſeſſed of Totila's humanity, was worthy to ſucceed him in the management of the war. Being reſolved to preſerve Cumæ, he advanced as far as mount Veſuvius, where a ſecond battle was fought, and the two armies performed prodigies of valour. Theia, who expoſed himſelf in the thickeſt of the fight, had ſeveral times changed his buckler, and wanting to do it once more, that which he had being loaded with twelve javelins, he was run through the moment that he laid open his breaſt; notwithſtanding which, the Goths continued the battle with equal fury; but at laſt, being exhauſted, offered to lay down their arms, on condition of being permitted to leave Italy with their effects, ſuffered to live according to their own laws, and treated as allies

allies of the empire; to which Narſes conſented, that he might not drive them to deſpair.

All Italy conquered

Cumæ, defended by Aligern, the brother of Totila, ſtill held out againſt ſo formidable an enemy; and though the Romans threw down ſome of the towers and a gate, by help of a mine which they dug through the grotto of the Sybil, they could not make their way into the city. Narſes therefore decamped, in order to make a conqueſt of Tuſcany. Lucca ſubmitted, after a long ſiege. At laſt Aligern voluntarily ſurrendered the keys of Cumæ, chooſing rather to ſubmit to the Romans than to the Francs and Alemains, an army of whom threatened Italy under pretence of coming to his aſſiſtance. Their leaders, Beuclinus and Leutharis, were defeated; and ſeven thouſand Goths, who had aſſembled in Compſa, now Conza, being forced to ſurrender in 554, Narſes completed the conqueſt of Italy, which he governed thirteen years. Thus fell the monarchy founded by Theodoric, and revived by Totila; two princes who may be compared with the greateſt men the world has produced. The Gothic nation, which Procopius affects to hold in ſuch contempt, merits the praiſe and regret of every man who is not blindly wedded to prejudice: but theſe Oſtrogoths, ſo juſt and humane, who treated the Catholics as their brethren, were held in deteſtation, becauſe they were Arians: the Italians, though happy under their dominion, formed a notion that it was diſgraceful for Catholics to be ſubject to heretics; and, traitors to an equitable government, made themſelves miſerable by a change of maſters.

The Italians hated the Oſtrogoths on account of their religion, and had reaſon to repent of it.

Affair of the *Three Chapters*.

Juſtinian, in the midſt of the great affairs of the empire, ſtill dogmatized, and deſired that his opinions ſhould be adopted as rules of faith. Several years before he had publiſhed an edict againſt the *Three Chapters*, the name given to the theological works of three authors; the firſt of whom, Theodorus of Mopſueſtia, died in the communion of the church; and the two others, Theodoret and Ibas, had been admitted to the

council

council of Chalcedon. But the emperour anathematized their writings; and all were obliged to ſubſcribe to his edict, under pain of diſgrace. Pope Vigilius, whom he invited to Conſtantinople, at firſt refuſed to ſign it, but afterwards conſented, upon which ſome weſtern biſhops having excommunicated the pope, he retracted, and was put in priſon, from whence making his eſcape, he, in his turn, excommunicated the adverſaries of the *Three Chapters*. A council was aſſembled at Conſtantinople, which, being entirely compoſed of eaſtern biſhops, condemned what the emperour had condemned. Though the Weſt refuſed to admit this deciſion, Vigilius at laſt received it; but for more than a hundred and fifty years it was rejected by a multitude of biſhops, eſpecially thoſe of Iſtria and Venetia, who formed the ſchiſm of Aquileia; however, in proceſs of time the univerſal church has ranked the Conſtantinopolitan among the œcumenical councils. We ſhall find the Eaſt, till the diſſolution of the empire, continually diſturbed by the ſame ſpirit of controverſy which in its influence is ſo pernicious to the buſineſs of the ſtate and the order of ſociety. The Weſt, under the dominion of the barbarians, was only ſhaken by war. It may be queſtioned, whether their ignorance was not preferable to the remains of ſcience on which the Orientals ſo much prided themſelves.

Juſtinian condemns them, and raiſes new troubles.

Council of Conſtantinople confirms the emperour's ſentence.

CHAP. VI.

End of Juſtinian's Reign.

A LONG peſtilence, dreadful earthquakes, continual wars, the barbarians conſtantly in arms, and carrying on their enterpriſes, the people always oppreſſed and unhappy—ſuch is the picture of Juſtinian's reign, notwithſtanding the ſucceſs of his generals. He imagined that he could ſecure the empire from invaſion by buying off its enemies; but the money which he meanly

Every thing ſucceeds ill, through the bad management of the government.

meanly laviſhed for this purpoſe only ſerved to increaſe their avarice and inſolence. Before him the ſtanding army amounted to ſix hundred and forty five thouſand; but he had reduced them to one hundred and fifty thouſand, diſperſed in all quarters of the empire; a reform which, though it would have been laudable in other circumſtances, yet was then a real evil, as the troops were inſufficient to make head againſt ſo many enemies; and even theſe were not furniſhed with proper ſubſiſtence, the ſums deſtined for their ſupport being embezzled by the receivers, and converted into food for their luxury. The conſequence of all this was, that the ſervice was abandoned at the very time when it became moſt neceſſary. The emperour flattered himſelf with propitiating, by relentleſs zeal, the divine vengeance, to which he attributed ſo many misfortunes. Blaſphemers and Pagans were put to death; but religion gained little by theſe ſacrifices, and the diſcontents ſtill increaſed.

Incurſions of the Abares, Turks and Huns.

Two nations, till then unknown, the Abares and Turks, had advanced from Tartary to the frontiers of the empire, from whence they ſent ambaſſadours, with an offer of alliance, that is, with demands of a ſubſidy; and Juſtinian did not fail to let them ſee, as had been ſo often done before, that they could gain more by attacking the Romans. The following year, 559, Thrace was over run by an army of Huns, who, paſſing the long wall, which in ſome places had been thrown down by earthquakes, and was every where unguarded, made incurſions to the very gates of Conſtantinople, and ſtruck an univerſal panic even in the heart of the imperial palace.

Beliſarius again employed, & recalled.

Beliſarius, who had paſſed ten years unnoticed at the court, then ſeemed his country's ſole refuge; and, being entruſted with the command, defeated the barbarians, though almoſt without an army. But envy awoke; he was immediately recalled, and the Huns renewed their invaſion. The emperour, according to cuſtom, bought them off, and by this rouſed the jealouſy of other tribes, who, dreading to loſe their ſubſi-

dies,

dies, which had been long paid them, fell furiouſly upon the new comers. And theſe barbarians deſtroyed one another with ſuch mercileſs and obſtinate rage, that not only their power, but their very name, was extinguiſhed.

The Huns deſtroy one another.

562. Peace with the Perſians on ſhameful terms.

The affair of greateſt importance was to conclude a ſolid peace with the Perſians, who were much more formidable enemies, both from the ſtrength of their empire and the ſuperiour qualities of their ſovereign. After ſeven years ſpent in negotiations, which were ſeveral times broken off, a peace no leſs ſhameful than neceſſary to the emperour, was concluded for fifty years. The principal conditions were, that the empire ſhould pay to the Perſians a ſubſidy of thirty thouſand pieces of gold; that Choſroes ſhould give up all claims on Lazica, and never grant the barbarians a paſſage through the Caſpian ſtraits; and that the Romans ſhould not come near any frontier of Perſia; a toleration was likewiſe granted to the Chriſtians, but upon condition that they ſhould not attempt to make any proſelytes.

Peculiarities of this treaty.

This treaty contained prayers to the Supreme Being in favour of thoſe who faithfully obſerved it, and imprecations on the violaters. Thus the ſame God was called to witneſs by both parties. The two princes wrote letters to each other, in order to ratify the peace: among the pompous titles aſſumed on that occaſion by the king of Perſia, that of *Giant of Giants* appears entirely new; could any thing leſſen its ridiculouſneſs, it would be, that in compariſon of Choſroes, Juſtinian appeared a dwarf.

A lady makes a donation of her money to a church, in order to avoid lending it to Juſtinian.

It is related, that the emperour, not knowing where to find money, applied to a lady of great wealth, for a loan. Amicia (that was the lady's name) required time, and converted her riches into plates of gold, with which ſhe lined the dome of a church; and when the work was finiſhed, ſhewed it to the prince, ſaying—*There is all I am worth, do with it what you pleaſe.* Upon which, Juſtinian commended her piety, and retired in great confuſion. Gregory of Tours, who relates

relates this circumſtance with great encomiums on the lady, by his narration furniſhes a proof of a kind of devotion then very common, which was equally laviſh to churches and monaſteries, and indifferent to the neceſſities of the public.

Conſpiracy. Though the prince gave evident ſigns of decay, ſome factious perſons formed a conſpiracy againſt his life; but the murderers were ſeized when on the very point of putting their attempt in execution. One crime paves the way for another. Three villains, ſuborned by the enemies of Beliſarius, accuſed that hero of being the author of the conſpiracy; in conſequence of which, he was ſtript of all his employments, and kept priſoner ſeven months in hourly expectation of death; yet, at laſt, he found means to clear himſelf, and was reſtored to the emperour's favour; which, however, he did not long enjoy, being prevented by death. Baronius adopts the fable, which is now univerſally decried, of his loſing his eyes, and begging his bread.

Diſgrace and death of Beliſarius.

His wife unworthy of him. Beliſarius is reproached with extreme weakneſs for his wife Antonina, the daughter of a charioteer of the circus, who by her birth, diſſoluteneſs, and malignity, may be reckoned a counter part of the empreſs Theodora.

565. The emperour becomes heretical. Nothing was wanting to complete the weakneſs of the old emperour but falling into hereſy, after having been a continual perſecutor of heretics: and into this he was drawn by his vanity of dogmatizing. He became a follower and promoter of the ſect of the Incorruptibles; who maintained that the body of Jeſus Chriſt, from the moment of his conception, was incapable of change and ſuffering. This chimera he attempted to eſtabliſh by an edict; baniſhed the patriarch Eutychius, and ſome other prelates who oppoſed his ſentiments; and was proceeding to tyrannize over conſciences with more violence than ever, when he died in the fourſcore and fourth year of his age, and thirty ninth of his reign.

His death.

He has been repreſented as a great man by a number of hiſtorians, who, doubtleſs, were dazzled by the ſplendour of the great events which have thrown a luſtre upon his reign. A patriarch of Conſtantinople canonized him ſix hundred years after his deceaſe; yet Evagrius, a cotemporary hiſtorian, ſays, that *after he had filled the empire with confuſion and diſorders, he went to receive his puniſhment in hell.* But neither the hiſtorian nor the patriarch were proper judges of his ſtate in the other world; it is the buſineſs of unprejudiced reaſon to fix the degree of eſteem or cenſure which he deſerves in this.

Opinions concerning him.

CHAP. VII.

Obſervations on the Life and Laws of Juſtinian.

THE hiſtorian Procopius, who was ſecretary to Beliſarius, ſometimes extols Juſtinian to the ſkies; but the book of *Anecdotes* is a moſt ſevere ſatire upon him; for which reaſon ſome able writers have thought it falſely aſcribed to that author. "But," ſays M. le Beau, "whoever underſtands the language in which it "is written, and is acquainted with his manner, which "is far ſuperiour to that of all the Greek authors poſ-"terior to Conſtantine, muſt plainly diſcover him in "that work." Without examining this point of criticiſm, I can lay nothing more inſtructive before the reader than the opinion of the celebrated Monteſquieu, who expreſſes no doubt concerning the authenticity of the book.

Anecdotes by Procopius.

"I acknowledge," ſays he, "that two reaſons make "me favour the ſecret hiſtory (the Anecdotes.) In the "firſt place, it accounts better for the ſurpriſing ſtate of "weakneſs in which the empire languiſhed during this "and the following reigns. My ſecond reaſon is drawn "from a monument ſtill exiſting among us: I mean "that emperour's laws, in which, during the courſe of "a few years, we ſee juriſprudence more varied than "during

Why Monteſquieu believes them genuine.

" during the three hundred laſt years of our monarchy. " Theſe variations are, for the moſt part, in matters of " ſo ſmall moment, that we cannot ſee what reaſon in- " duced the legiſlator to make them, if we have not " recourſe to the ſecret hiſtory for an explanation, and " ſay that the deciſions and laws of this prince were " equally venal." *(Grand. and Dec. of Rom. Emp.)*

Character of Juſtinian's legiſlation.

We may therefore conclude that Juſtinian's legiſlation, whatever encomiums may be beſtowed upon it by its admirers, is defective in ſeveral eſſential points: for ordinances that have no fixed permanency, but are variable from one day to another, and conſequently dictated by caprice, if I may venture the aſſertion, are leſs proper for producing regularity than confuſion in ſociety. The only method of eſtabliſhing order and correcting abuſes is, to make the laws ſimple, clear, unequivocal, and reduce them to the true principles of equity. Had thoſe of Juſtinian been generally of this ineſtimable character, why were they endleſsly multiplied? Why have they produced commentaries numerous enough to fill libraries?

The *Code.*

The emperour, being deſirous of publiſhing a ſyſtem of juriſprudence, employed for that purpoſe Tribonian, a court lawyer, who made a trade of juſtice, and beſides, was not endowed with a genius extenſive enough for ſuch a work. The *Code*, which includes the imperial laws from the beginning of Adrian's reign, and appeared in 529, was a haſty compilation: beſides the the publication of more than two hundred new ordinances made by the emperour, the faults remarked in the firſt edition made it neceſſary to give a ſecond in 534, which is that now extant.

The *Digeſt.*

The *Digeſt* (or *Pandects*) which was drawn up in three years, appeared in 533. This was an immenſe work, in which it was deſigned to collect, and arrange in methodical order, with amendments, all that was uſeful in the works of the ancient lawyers, which amounted to more than two thouſand volumes. The emperour, when he gave it the authority of law, forbid its

its being commented. In caſe of doubt, recourſe was to be had to the prince, who was inveſted with the ſole power of ſupplying the defects, or interpreting the meaning of the laws. He ordered the judges to conform to that given in the digeſt, making all other interpretations of no authority, and even forbidding their being quoted. Tribonian, and the other compilers, having had full liberty to change, to lengthen, or abridge, the texts both in the digeſt and code, it is not to be doubted that many of the laws or deciſions, given under the names of ancient emperours or judges, were conſiderably vitiated.

Inſtitutes.

The *Inſtitutions*, which were publiſhed a ſhort time before the digeſt, had likewiſe the force of law. They contain the firſt principles of juriſprudence, and are much more eſteemed than the two other works.

The *Novellæ.*

At laſt came Juſtinian's *Novellæ*, which, in ſome inſtances, are directly contrary to the code. He ſeemed often to make laws merely for the pleaſure of changing them in a ſhort time.

That ſyſtem of laws grew every where into diſuſe.

In the Eaſt this great body of laws ſubſiſted only till the ninth century; when the emperour Baſilius ſubſtituted the *Baſilica* in its ſtead. In the Weſt it was firſt abrogated by the laws of the Lombards, and continued in oblivion till the twelfth century, when a copy of the digeſt was found at Amalfi. Thus the real triumph of Juſtinian's legiſlation has been over modern nations, who unhappily were acquainted with it too early and too late; too late, becauſe it would have diſpelled many errours which ſprung from barbariſm and ignorance; too early, becauſe for want of diſcernment the good and bad were adopted indifferently. That emperour himſelf furniſhes a ſtrong argument againſt the utility of his laws, for diſorder univerſally prevailed during his whole reign; however, it muſt be acknowledged, that in the midſt of confuſions and dangers, laws loſe their efficacy.

I ſhall conclude with ſome obſervations of Monteſquieu, becauſe they will inſtruct us how to reaſon on matters

Whimsical law concerning husbands.

matters of such importance. "Justinian ordained, that "a husband might be divorced, and the wife not lose "her portion, provided he had not been able to con- "summate the marriage in two years, which period he "afterwards lengthened to three. But in such cases "two years are equivalent to three, and three are no "better than two." (*Esprit. des Loix*, l. 29. c. 16.) We have here a palpable instance of the capriciousness of this legislation.

Law permitting divorce in case either of the parties choose a monastic life.

"Justinian's law, which made the consent of either "husband or wife to enter into a monastery sufficient "reason for divorce, was entirely contrary to the prin- "ciples of civil jurisprudence. Causes of divorce ought "to spring from some impediments which could not be "foreseen before marriage; but the desire of living in "chastity could be foreseen, because it is an affection "of the mind. This law favours inconstancy in a state "which by its nature is perpetual; it is inconsistent "with the fundamental principle of divorce, which per- "mits the dissolution of one marriage only in hopes of "another; and even if we consider the matter in a re- "ligious light, it is only offering to God victims with- "out a sacrifice." (*Ibid.* l. 26. c. 9.) Whatever this writer says, if we consider the matter in a religious light, the offering may be a real sacrifice; but his reasoning is no less just, so far as it respects the principles of civil jurisprudence with regard to divorce.

The *rescripts* ought not to have the force of laws.

"The Roman emperours, as well as our princes, "declared their pleasure by decrees and edicts; but, "what our princes do not, they permitted the judges "or private persons, who had differences, to put ques- "tions to them by letters, and their answers were called "rescripts. It is plain that this was a bad method "of legislation. Those who in this manner request "laws, are no proper guides for the legislator: the facts "are always unfairly represented. . . . Macrinus had "resolved to abolish all those rescripts; he could not "bear that the answers of Commodus, Caracalla, and "so many other ignorant princes, should be regarded

"as

"as laws; but Juſtinian was of a different opinion, and "filled his code with them." (*Ibid.* l. 29. c. 17.) The reſcripts often contained excellent principles, worthy of being adopted as laws; but it was of the utmoſt importance to make a proper ſelection.

Law for enriching the church.

Another law, which might have exerciſed Monteſquieu's critical abilities, bears, that if the condition of having children be annexed to a legacy, or other donation, it ſhall be held as fulfilled on the legatee's entering into the church or a monaſtery. The ancient legiſlators had entertained juſter notions of the neceſſity of encouraging marriage; and ſo ſtrange a novelty was by no means requiſite for promoting the real good of the church.

Abolition of the conſulſhip.

In 541 Juſtinian aboliſhed the conſulſhip, which had long been an office merely titular. The conſuls walked in proceſſion ſeven times in the year, and threw money among the people. This expenſive piece of vanity ordinarily coſt two thouſand pounds weight of gold, part of which was often paid from the public ſtock, few conſuls being able to ſupport the burden. However, ſome of the ſucceeding emperours occaſionally aſſumed that title.

The empire ſtill grows weaker.

When we ſee a vaſt empire attacked on every ſide, paying ſubſidies even to its enemies, exhauſted of money, and yet a prey to luxury, in want of defenders, and filled with diſſenſion, it is evident that its ruin draws near, and its laſt ſucceſſes are only new ſymptoms of decay. Even victories and conqueſts increaſe its weakneſs, the few great men to whom it owes them ſoon diſappear, and their acquiſitions become an additional weight to ſink the ſtate.

Succeſſors of JUSTINIAN, *to the Conqueſts of the Saracens.*

BEFORE we conclude, let us take a curſory view of ſome events, which will ſerve to ſhew the decay of the empire, and throw light upon the Modern Hiſtory.

Juſtin II. a bad emperour.

Juſtin II. the nephew and ſucceſſor of Juſtinian, a weak voluptuary, haſtened the deſtruction of the empire by his ſilly pride and imprudent abſurdities. Narſes had governed Italy with ſufficient ſteadineſs to reſtrain the barbarians for thirteen years, but perhaps with too great ſeverity to make his government beloved. The Italians, always inclined to murmur, lamented their being ſubjected to the government of an eunuch, and regretted the Gothic yoke, which they had been anxious to ſhake off. Narſes was deteſted by the empreſs Sophia, who added her influence to the reproaches thrown out againſt him by envy. Not ſatisfied with ruining him in the mind of the prince, ſhe inſulted him by ſending him a diſtaff and ſpindle, deſiring that he would come and ſpin with her maids. The old general, tranſported with rage, replied—*I will ſpin her a ſkein ſhe ſhall not be able to wind*; and he invited the Lombards into Italy. The deacon, Paul, an hiſtorian of that country, gives this account of the fact; and M. le Beau prefers his authority to the objections of a number of critics, who deny it from bare conjecture. Narſes died ſoon after of regret; and his ſucceſſor Longinus, the firſt exarch of Ravenna, was not equal to the taſk of reſiſting the torrent which came pouring upon the empire.

Narſes inſulted, and recalled from Italy.

568. Conqueſt of Alboinus, king of the Lombards

The Lombards, one of thoſe German nations which probably ſprung from Scandinavia, had obtained Pannonia and Noricum from Juſtinian, and their king, Alboinus, meditated the conqueſt of Italy; but being reſolved firſt to ſecure himſelf againſt his formidable neighbours, the Gepidæ, he entered into an alliance with

with the khan or prince of the Abares. He defeated and killed Cunimond, king of the Gepidæ, and married his daughter; then paſſing the Julian Alps, eaſily made himſelf maſter of Venetia, which reached as far as the Addua, (Adda,) and extended his conqueſts on every ſide with great rapidity, forming three conſiderable dutchies, Friuli, Spoleto, and Benevento. Pavia ſurrendered after a three years ſiege, and was made the capital of his kingdom.

What remained to the emperours in Italy.

The Lombards, being always bought off, never made themſelves maſters of Rome; and Ravenna, the maritime towns of Campania, *Brutium*, the ancient Calabria, in which were Brunduſium, Tarentum, Hydruntum (Otranto), and Sicily, were all that remained to the empire. The *exarchs*, like the Perſian ſatraps, governed that country with ſovereign authority, but removable at the will of the emperour, to whom they were obliged to pay a ſum of money annually. It is already eaſy to be foreſeen, that the *exarchate*, not being able to ſupport itſelf without aſſiſtance from Conſtantinople, muſt fall into the hands of foreigners.

Exarchs.

Tragical death of Alboinus.

Alboinus rendered himſelf equally valued and reſpected by his juſtice and clemency; and, what makes the nobleſt panegyric of a conqueror, the people whom he ſubdued were happy under his dominion; but he was deprived of reaping the fruits of his valour and prudence by a tragical death. According to the practice of the barbarous nations of the North, he cauſed a cup to be made of the ſkull of Cunimond, king of the Gepidæ, whom he had killed with his own hand, to drink out of at ſolemn feſtivals. One day, when he was heated with wine, he preſented this cup to his queen Roſmonda, the daughter of Cunimond, inviting her to *drink with her father*. Seized with rage and horrour, ſhe contrived a ſcheme of cruel vengeance, and propoſed to Perideus, a brave officer, to be her inſtrument, and to aſſaſſinate the king; but not being able to prevail with him, ſhe employed a very extraordinary artifice. The officer having a commerce of gallantry with

with one of the queen's women, Roſmonda one night took her place, and after he had gratified his paſſion, diſcovered herſelf, bidding him *chooſe whether he would kill Alboinus, or die the victim of his rage.* Perideus, dreading the puniſhment, aſſaſſinated the king in preſence of Roſmonda.

Clef aſſaſſinated.

Clef, the ſucceſſor of Alboinus, was deteſted for his avarice and cruelty; and after a reign of eighteen months was murdered by one of his domeſtics; upon which the Lombard nobility ſhook off the yoke of the royal authority. For a ſpace of ten years, thirty ſix dukes governed each their own ſubjects like ſo many tyrants, and then choſe Autharic, the ſon of Clef, who added to the conqueſts of their nation. If the dukes had not choſen a king, the Lombards would very ſoon have been ruined by anarchy.

The thirty ſix dukes.

Juſtin quarrels with the Perſians.

At the time that Juſtin loſt Italy, notwithſtanding the peace for fifty years which had been concluded by Juſtinian, he provoked a war with the Perſians. He ſent ambaſſadours to conclude an alliance with the khan of the Turks that inhabited the country near mount Altai at the ſource of the Irtis. He ſwore to defend the Perſarmenians and Iberians who had rebelled againſt Choſroes for compelling them to renounce Chriſtianity; and, Choſroes having demanded the penſions that were due to him, haughtily replied, that he would not pay them; that if the king of Perſia was deſirous of his friendſhip it was inconſiſtent to require money; and that he hoped to lower the pride of the Perſian monarch, and deliver that country from a tyrant, who was a perſecutor of the Chriſtians.

573. He is unfortunate, and loſes his ſenſes.

War was rekindled, and the Roman army laid ſiege to Niſibis; but the inhabitants did not deign to ſhut their gates, and the ſiege was ſoon raiſed. Choſroes took poſſeſſion of Dara, the bulwark of the empire in Meſopotamia, and Syria was laid waſte by one of his generals. Juſtin, borne down with accumulated misfortunes, loſt his ſenſes. Tiberius, whom he had created Cæſar, a ſoldier of fortune, yet worthy of the throne,

throne, took prudent meaſures to ſtop the progreſs of the Perſians. The haughty Choſroes was defeated at Melitine in Leſſer Armenia, and ſaw his kingdom laid waſte. He died, and his ſucceſſor Hormiſdas continued the war, which was prolonged under ſeveral reigns, till the Saracens began to make conqueſts; ſo that the tottering empire received new concuſſions on every quarter. 576. Death of Choſroes.

Juſtin died in the year 578. By *Nov.* 140, he repealed the laws of Juſtinian againſt divorces made with mutual conſent, and gave liberty to married perſons to ſeparate as formerly, if they did not agree, and to contract a ſecond marriage. *Marriage*, ſaid he, *being entered into by mutual conſent, ought to be diſſolved when inclinations change.* He added, that he had conſented to this law at the requeſt of a great number of people, to prevent poiſonings, and to put an end to irreconcilable enmities. So corrupted were the manners, and ſo difficult was it for the dictates of religion, with regard to the ſanctity and indiſſoluble tie of marriage, to triumph over the influence of vice and cuſtom! Law relating to divorces.

Tiberius, whoſe prudent government had already placed the Roman name in a reſpectable light, found himſelf poſſeſſed of the ſovereign authority upon the death of Juſtin. Benevolent, juſt, and active, his whole time was dedicated to procure happineſs to his ſubjects. However, not having reſolution enough to reſiſt the barbarians, or rather yielding to the ſtate of the times, he was obliged to abandon to the Abares, Sirmium, a place of importance, and the only one remaining to the empire in Pannonia: their khan even inſiſted upon being inſtantly paid three years penſion which was due to him, at the rate of eighty thouſand pieces of gold yearly; and the emperour to preſerve peace was obliged to comply. A victory gained by Mauritius over the Perſians, who had defeated him upon a former occaſion, did not compenſate for this affront. Tiberius named Mauritius his ſucceſſor, and died after a too ſhort reign. Theophylact ſays, that the 578. Reign of Tiberius.

the plenty and proſperity of his ſubjects were his wealth and his glory; he deteſted the trappings of royalty, and deſired to be called the father, rather than the maſter of his people.

582. Reign of Mauritius.

Though Mauritius deſerved the character of an able general, and poſſeſſed the qualities of a good prince, his reign could not reſtore the affairs of the empire. The Lombards maintained their power under their kings Autharic and Agilulf; and the Abares procured an increaſe of their penſions. After a long ſeries of hoſtilities, the conquering khan made an offer of reſtoring the priſoners for one piece of gold a head, and afterwards for much leſs; but Mauritius refuſed; and the priſoners, to the number of twelve thouſand, were maſſacred, which, however, did not prevent a peace from being concluded; when twenty thouſand pieces of gold were added to the yearly tribute paid to the Abares. Some people accuſe the emperour of ſhameful avarice; while others ſay that he only refuſed the ranſom from a motive of revenge, as he had reaſon to be offended with theſe priſoners. Whatever was the cauſe, complaints and univerſal diſguſt ſucceeded.

Twelve thouſand Romans maſſacred becauſe he refuſed to pay their ranſom.

He is cruelly dethroned by Phocas.

Two years after, Phocas preſented himſelf before Conſtantinople, at the head of an army of rebels: having been proclaimed emperour, he cauſed five ſons of the unhappy Mauritius to be beheaded. Mauritius, who was preſent at the execution, exclaimed at every ſtroke—*Thou art juſt, O Lord, and righteous are thy judgments*. The death of the father cloſed this bloody ſcene, which, of the many horrours we have ſeen, was the moſt enormouſly wicked.

603. St. Gregory obtains what he deſired.

Though Phocas was a monſter, and totally void of merit, the pope St. Gregory wrote to him in honourable terms, ſuch undoubtedly as were preſcribed by ceremony, or the intereſt of the holy ſee. That famous pontiff, whoſe zeal and charity did honour to his dignity, had quarrelled with Mauritius about the title of œcumenical patriarch, of which the biſhops of Conſtantinople were ambitious. Juſtinian had given them that

title,

title, and John Peinaſtes *(the faſter)* who was reſpected on account of his auſterities, and liberalities to the poor, wanted to maintain it, notwithſtanding the zealous oppoſition of the pope, who procured a declaration in favour of the privileges of the Roman church from Phocas, but to which no reſpect was paid by the Greeks.

Gregory took the humble title of *the Servant of the Servants of God:* which in him was an expreſſion of ſincere modeſty, and added to the reſpect paid to his perſon and dignity. Such was his credit at Rome, that if he had been a leſs virtuous man he might have rendered himſelf independent. This was probably the cauſe that Phocas ſhewed him ſuch attention; and was likewiſe one of the reaſons of the progreſs of the pontifical authority.

The empire was overwhelmed with every kind of diſaſter under the reign of this tyrant. Choſroes II. king of Perſia, who had been ſupported by Mauritius againſt a rebel, became the implacable enemy of Phocas. The Perſians broke through every barrier, and even ſeized Edeſſa, which, the inhabitants alledged, had an authentic promiſe from Jeſus Chriſt that it ſhould never be taken. They laid waſte all Aſia, from the Tigris to the Boſphorus: Chalcedon, which was only parted from Conſtantinople by the ſtrait, ſaw them at her gates.

The Perſians take the city of Edeſſa, & advance to Chalcedon.

The cruelty of the tyrant, rather than the public diſaſters, occaſioned continual conſpiracies: the horrour of his barbarities was increaſed by a barbarous devotion; he compelled all the Jews to be baptized: but at laſt Priſcus, his ſon in law, whom he ſuſpected, invited Heraclius, the exarch of Africa, in the name of the ſenate, to come to the aſſiſtance of the nation.

Conſpiracy againſt Phocas.

Heraclius ſent his ſon with a fleet. The port of Conſtantinople was forced, and Phocas ſeized and dragged with his hands tied behind him before the conqueror, who exclaiming with indignation—*Thou wretch, how haſt thou governed the empire?* he replied, *Do thou govern better.* At theſe words young Heraclius flew

Heraclius cauſes him to be executed, & ſucceeds him.

upon him, and, treading him under his feet, cauſed him to be cruelly mutilated, and his head cut off in preſence of the people. He reigned eight years, and was ſucceeded by this ſame Heraclius, ſon of the exarch.

611. Progreſs of the barbarians on every ſide.

The emperour, though poſſeſſed of valour and military talents, ſunk into inactivity, which ſtifled all paſſion for noble actions, either from the deplorable ſtate of the empire, which prevented his forming any important undertakings; or that a reliſh for pleaſure added to the ſeductions of grandeur. The little that remained to the Romans in Spain was ſeized by the Viſigoths: the Lombards made themſelves dreaded at Ravenna, where the oppreſſions of the exarchs cauſed them to be every day more and more deteſted; the Perſians took Jeruſalem, and laid waſte the country of Egypt: the Abares, having recovered their loſſes by the enjoyment of ſeveral years repoſe, began to move, and obliged them again to purchaſe peace.

The diſtribution of bread at Conſtantinople diſcontinued.

We muſt recollect that Conſtantine imprudently introduced the cuſtom of diſtributing bread at Conſtantinople, which was conſiderably augmented by Theodoſius; but for want of money, though Heraclius laid a tax upon every loaf, it could no longer be continued. The people murmured; and the emperour wanted to retire into Africa, but was prevented.

622. Heraclius defeats the Perſians.

His courage was at laſt rouſed by the inſults of Choſroes II. and the victories of the Perſians. He turned all his views and his whole ſtrength on that ſide, and, having headed his army, was attended with the greateſt ſucceſs for ſix following campaigns. He procured immenſe treaſures by the pillage of the palace of Daſtagerd, to which Choſroes had transferred his reſidence, becauſe the aſtrologers had made him afraid to live in Cteſiphon, his capital. According to an eaſtern writer, who exaggerates in the manner of his country, the amount of five thouſand millions of French livres was paid annually into the king of Perſia's treaſury: the jewels alone filled a thouſand coffers, &c.

The immenſe treaſure which he ſeizes.

Choſroes,

Chosroes, being defeated by the Romans, was dethroned by his son Siroes; who, after having the barbarity to let his father die of hunger, concluded a peace with Heraclius. The two kingdoms preserved their ancient limits, the prisoners on both sides were restored, and the famous cross which the Persians had carried off from Jerusalem was brought back in triumph by the emperour. 628. He makes peace with Siroes.

This war was scarcely ended, when he sunk back to his former indolence. He was no longer a hero, but an inactive, effeminate, narrow minded prince, engaged in subtil controversies at the very time he was losing the greatest part of his dominions. Monotheliism tore open the wounds which the Christian world had received from so many different heresies. It was always a prevailing madness among the Greeks, who were intractable in their opinions, to dispute about incomprehensible mysteries; to render them more obscure by their attempts to explain them, and perpetually to revive the most dangerous contentions. The Arians had rejected the divinity of the word, to maintain the unity of God; the Nestorians had given two persons to Jesus Christ, to support the opinion of his having two natures; the Eutychians, to maintain the unity of the person, confounded the two natures in one; and lastly, the Monothelites supposed only one will, as they could not conceive two wills to exist in the same person; and this heresy, which it was supposed would reconcile the different sectaries, found a great many followers. Heraclius, united with the patriarchs of Alexandria and Constantinople, published the famous edict called *Ecthesis* in its favour, which was proscribed by pope John IV. in 639. Pope Honorius, deceived by appearances, had neglected this new opinion as of no consequence to the faith; but he very soon saw that it affected even the substance of the doctrines of the church; and, far from conciliating the minds of men, it must have the contrary effect. He disturbs the state by favouring Monotheliism. The Ecthesis.

Mahomet and his religion.

While the *Ecthesis* occasioned most fatal disturbances, the empire and Christianity were threatened with a dreadful revolution, which was at no great distance. Mahomet, a native of Mecca in Arabia, of a poor but distinguished family, was bred in ignorance, but, having acquired some idea of the doctrines of Christianity by an intimacy with a Nestorian monk, conceived the great design of founding a new religion and a new empire at the same time. This ingenious impostor and daring enthusiast, having artfully prepared the minds of the people, began, at the age of forty four, in the year 614, to set himself up as a prophet. He preached to the Arabs his countrymen (commonly called Saracens) his new religion, which was a compound of Christianity and Judaism; equally the enemy of Christians, Jews, and Idolaters; respectable for its doctrine of the unity of God, and precepts of charity, but in other respects filled with fables and ridiculous superstitions, yet very well calculated to inspire invincible enthusiasm, which bids defiance to danger and death.

Two tenets favourable to enthusiasm.

Two tenets of the Mahometan religion conduced to this end: the first was, that paradise would be the reward of every believer falling in battle; the other, that the duration of human life was so regulated by the decrees of God, that no precautions to preserve it could avail.

Flight & success of Mahomet.

The new prophet at first met with opponents, and, being obliged to fly from Mecca, took shelter at Medina, where he was protected by some Christians and Jews who were settled there. By his abilities and exploits he united under his authority all the tribes of Arabs, who had hitherto been divided and independent, and became their king and their priest.

Hegyra of the Mussulmen.

The *hegyra*, or flight of Mahomet, the famous epocha of the Mahometans, happened in the year 622. Their years are lunar, consisting of three hundred and fifty four days, eight hours, forty eight minutes; they are reduced to our reckoning by approximation. If they cut off one in thirty three of theirs, the difference will be only an anticipation of six days. Ma-

Mahomet, with his Koran* in one hand, and his ſabre in the other, laid the foundation of a vaſt empire. He ſent to invite princes and people to receive *Iſlamiſm*, the name which he gave to his religion. The governour of Boſtra, a Saracen, who was attached to the ſervice of the emperour, having cauſed the prophet's deputy to be aſſaſſinated, he attacked the Romans. Caled, the moſt famous of his warriors, whom he called *The ſword of God*, defeated a numerous army with only a handful of ſoldiers. This was the beginning of a war which laſted more than eight hundred years, ſo fatal and diſgraceful to the Chriſtian name.

Beginning of the war between the Arabs and Romans.

Mahomet died in the year 632, and the ſixty third of his age, recommending three things to the attention of his friends; to be aſſiduous in prayer, to drive idolaters out of Arabia, and to communicate the privileges of Muſſulmen to all proſelytes; and theſe three points were revered as divine commands. Notwithſtanding the abſurdities contained in the Koran, he ſaid, and perſuaded his followers to believe, there was not a word in that book which had not been brought to him from heaven by the angel Gabriel. The Mahometan theologians have had keen diſputes among themſelves to determine whether that work was *created* or *uncreated*. Certainly the author was moſt ſucceſsful; he formed heroes, zealous enthuſiaſts, who, animated with his ſpirit, rapidly executed aſtoniſhing enterpriſes.

632. Death of Mahomet.

The Koran.

He intended his ſon in law, Ali, to be his ſucceſſor, as being moſt deſerving; but, notwithſtanding, Abubeker, his father in law, was preferred; from whence originated the moſt violent ſchiſm and irreconcilable hatred between the Turks and Perſians. The laſt maintain, that the three firſt Caliſs† before Ali were uſurpers, which occaſioned great religious diſputes. If the Saracens had quarrelled among themſelves about this

He is ſucceeded by Abubeker, which occaſions a ſchiſm.

Character of the Muſſulmen.

* *Alcoran* ſignifies, in Arabic, the *book*, by way of eminence. It contains the precepts and fictions of Mahomet.

† The word *calif* ſignifies the *lieutenant* of Mahomet. This was the title adopted by his ſucceſſors, whoſe royal and ſacerdotal power made ſuch progreſs.

this point, or about ſome article in the Koran, undoubtedly they would have had no great advantage over the Greeks; but in the firſt fervour of enthuſiaſm, ſtill poor and accuſtomed to a life of hardſhips, fond of fighting, and cloſely united by a fanatical religion, they in ſome degree conſumed every obſtruction like the fire of heaven. *We bring you either paradiſe or hell*, ſaid they; *you muſt either embrace Iſlamiſm, pay a tribute, or be cut in pieces by our ſwords*: and they kept their words.

Conqueſts and laſt will of Abubeker.

In two years time Abubeker conquered a great part of Syria, and died without leaving any property: his daily expenſe did not exceed two ſhillings Engliſh. The beginning of his will is admired. *This is the laſt will of Abubeker, made when he was on the point of leaving this world, when infidels begin to believe, when the wicked ceaſe to doubt, and when liars ſpeak the truth.*

Omar.

Conqueſt of Perſia.

Omar, his ſucceſſor and imitator, very ſoon completed the conqueſt of Syria; but acquired much more honour by pardoning a villain, who had been ſent by Conſtantine, the ſon of Heraclius, to aſſaſſinate him. He reduced all Meſopotamia in one campaign, while Amrou, one of his generals, made a conqueſt of Egypt; and almoſt all Perſia belonged to the Saracens at the time of his death, which happened in the year 644. The conqueſt was completed the following year by Othman, his ſucceſſor; and the mighty empire of Perſia, which had been ſo formidable to the Romans ever ſince the time of Craſſus, ſunk with its laſt king Iſdegerd III. under the ſuperiour force of a nation that had been looked upon with contempt before Mahomet. There it met with the poiſon of luxury, by which it muſt have been contaminated ſooner or later; but that did not prevent it from adding Africa to ſo many other conqueſts. We ſhall ſee it penetrate into Spain, Gaul, and Italy, and in its turn at laſt ſubdued by the Tartars. The whole world is but one theatre of bloody revolutions.

Othman.

Inſtances of the terrible fa-

A thouſand remarkable events ſerve to prove the ſuperiority of the Muſſulmen over the Romans of the

latter

latter ages, whom they defeated in every campaign. I shall quote a few instances. The Saracens fled upon seeing their general taken prisoner in an engagement, when one of their officers exclaimed—*Have you forgot that to turn your back upon the enemy is to offend God and his prophet? What matters it though Derar be taken prisoner? God is living and sees you.* They instantly returned to the charge, and defeated the Romans. Fanaticism of the Saracens.

Before the battle of Yarmouk, which preceded the taking of Jerusalem, one of the leaders encouraged the army by the following speech: *Mussulmen, recollect that paradise is before you, hell and the devil behind you.*

Constantine, in a conference with Amrou, asked him, by what right he pretended to Syria. *The right which the Creator bestows*, replied he; *the earth belongs to God, he bestows it as seemeth to him good for his servants, and his pleasure is manifested by success in war.*

Mahomet condemned a Mussulman for having cheated a Jew, and the Mussulman presumed to appeal to Omar. When he was made acquainted with the fact, he drew his sabre, and striking off the head of the criminal—*Behold what the man deserves*, said he, *who rejects the sentence of the prophet.*

When Omar came to lay siege to Jerusalem, he brought his provision, with a bottle filled with water, and a wooden platter, upon his camel. Having observed some of the Saracens dressed in silk (they were clothes taken from the enemy), he commanded them to be dragged through the mud, with their faces towards the earth, and their clothes torn in pieces.

When Alexandria was taken, Amrou wanted to save part of the library, and having asked Omar's permission, received the following answer—*If the books which you mention contain nothing but what is in the book of God, they are of no use; if they do not agree with it, they are wicked: therefore give orders that they may be burnt.*

If we reflect on the voluptuous luxury of the court of Constantinople; on the factions of the circus, which occasioned continual seditions, always protected by some of The Roman empire could not resist them.

of the princes; on the theological diſputes which diſtracted the minds of the people; on the weakneſs of the army, the exhauſted finances, their meanneſs, and their ruined morals; we cannot be ſurpriſed at ſeeing the empire fall a prey to the Muſſulmen. What men, when compared with their enemies! It is fanaticiſm contending againſt bigotry.

CHRONOLOGICAL

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Of ſome of the principal Facts recorded in Ancient Hiſtory.

THIS table will contain but very few facts, though it appeared neceſſary, in order to connect the different parts of hiſtory by their dates. They who are deſirous to find the time when any particular action happened, or to enter into the minutiæ of chronology, are referred to the Abbé Langlet's tables; my deſign being entirely different from his, of conſequence requires a very different method.

The common chronologiſts, following the Hebrew text of the ſcriptures, fix the epocha of the deluge in the year 2348 before Chriſt. But ſeveral learned men admit the authenticity of a ſeries of aſtronomical obſervations made at Babylon, which goes as far back as the year 2234 before our era, as well as of an obſervation made in China 2155 years before the ſame era. It is evidently impoſſible that the Chaldeans and Chineſe ſhould have been aſtronomers in ſo ſhort a time after the deluge. Other monuments of profane hiſtory, ſtill more inconteſtible, are as difficult to be reconciled with the Hebrew text; for which reaſon the beſt critics prefer the Samaritan, which throws the deluge about 600 years farther back; or the Septuagint, which makes it ſtill more ancient. However, their ſyſtems ſtill remain expoſed to almoſt inſuperable objections. Let us content ourſelves with obſerving, that even at the date of thoſe aſtronomical obſervations, profane hiſtory conſiſts only of a heap of fables, or a bare liſt of kings. The prodigious antiquity claimed by ſome nations is therefore a groundleſs hypotheſis. I ſhall, for the moſt part, keep Langlet's dates, though it be neceſſary to warn the reader, that in the moſt diſtant periods perfect exactneſs is not to be expected.

To the Reign of AUGUSTUS.

MENES, firſt king of EGYPT. — Before J. C. 2965.
Egypt would be rendered uninhabitable by the inundations of the Nile, if nature had not been forced by the labours of art. Hence it is probable that the Indians and other nations were prior to the Egyptians. But, becauſe we are very ill acquainted with antiquity, theſe are the firſt people who make a figure in hiſtory. Fohi, the firſt emperour of China, is placed ſo far back in the Chineſe chronology, that the authors of the Engliſh Univerſal Hiſtory have taken him for Noah.

BELUS, founder of the kingdom of *Babylon*. — 2640.
The eſtabliſhment of the empire of Aſſyria in 2229. *Ninus* ſucceeded to *Belus*, and *Semiramis* to Ninus. According to ſome, Babylon was built, according to others, only embelliſhed, by that princeſs. Hiſtorical truths are here ſtill disfigured by fables.

YAO, emperour of *China*; epocha of the firſt aſtronomical obſervation by the Chineſe. The authenticity of this obſervation is maintained — 2300.
by

Before J. C.

by M. Mairan, and many other learned men. The reign of *Yao* is placed by M. Freret in the year before Chriſt 2145.

2040. MÆRIS, king of Egypt. This reign is memorable by the digging of the famous lake for receiving the waters of the Nile, becauſe it is a certain monument of power and induſtry. We know not when the firſt pyramids were erected: ſome writers even pretend that they exiſted before the deluge.

2009. OURANUS, father of *Saturn* and the other *Titans*. This race reigned in Greece over a people who were yet ſavage. *Jupiter*, ſon of Saturn, was king of *Theſſaly*. *Inachus*, his couſin german, was king of *Argos*. The Titans are conjectured to have been Egyptians. The Greeks deified them on the model of the Egyptian divinities.

1722. SESOSTRIS, the moſt celebrated king of Egypt, for his laws, his conqueſts, and his buildings. (F. Tournemine places the beginning of his reign in 1659.) Joſeph was then in Egypt. However, we find nothing in Geneſis characteriſtic of a monarch ſo celebrated by profane authors. If the Chineſe were an Egyptian colony, according to the hypotheſis of M. de Guignes, (whoſe idea is likewiſe found in M. de Mairan's letters to F. Parrenin) the eſtabliſhment of that colony is to be aſcribed to Seſoſtris.

1582. CECROPS, in Greece, the founder of *Athens*, which was at firſt called Cecropia. He was an Egyptian. Greece owed every thing to ſtrangers who ſettled in it. *Cadmus*, a Phœnician, came into that country in 1519, built Thebes in Bœotia, and taught the art of writing.

1432. MINOS, king and legiſlator in Crete, whoſe laws ſerved as a model to Lycurgus. The Arundel marbles fix to this time the diſcovery of iron, which was cauſed by a conflagration of Mount Ida. This diſcovery deſerves to make an epocha as well as legiſlation. But it had been long known elſewhere, though the ſecret of working it was poſterior to that of purifying other metals. A ſhort time after, *Ceres* and *Triptolemus* introduced agriculture into Greece.

1260. THESEUS, king of Athens. This city then became conſiderable by the reunion of the twelve villages of Attica, under the ſame government.

1209. Taking of TROY. The barbarous manners of thoſe heroic times, deſcribed by Homer, who lived about three centuries after, form a very intereſting picture.

1129. HERACLIDÆ, or deſcendants of Hercules, return to Peloponneſus, from whence they had been driven, and ſpread terrour through that country. Several Greek colonies eſtabliſhed, eſpecially in Aſia Minor.

1095. ARCHONS, perpetual, eſtabliſhed at Athens after the death of *Codrus*. The Athenians were always ready to change their government.

944. HESIOD. That poet, and more particularly Homer, who is ſomewhat leſs ancient, gave marks of the aſtoniſhing heights to which genius would one day riſe in Greece. *Solomon* was nearly their cotemporary, for he died in 980.

888. CARTHAGE, built or enlarged by Dido, ſiſter of Pygmalion, king of Tyre. The induſtry of the Phœnicians, the moſt celebrated of the ancient nations for navigation and commerce, was inherited by the Carthaginians, and raiſed their power in a ſhort time.

885. LYCURGUS, or legiſlation of *Lacedæmon*. This is the epocha of ſeveral ages abounding in prodigies of republican virtue.

776. OLYMPIADS. The olympic games had been eſtabliſhed a long time before, and were renewed in 884; yet the olympiads, which were periods of four years, and ſerve to regulate the Greek chronology, commence only in 776.

753. ROME built. It was at firſt only a refuge for banditti; but afterwards domineered over the moſt celebrated empires.

747. NABONASSAR, era of. Here begin the authentic obſervations of the Chaldeans: thoſe are diſputed which Porphyrius tells us Calliſthenes ſent to Ariſtotle, and which reached back 1907 years.

594. SOLON, or legiſlation of Athens. The legiſlator was a philoſopher, whoſe laws would have been better had the Athenians been leſs ungovernable. In his life time *Piſiſtratus* ſeized the government, was driven out, reſtored, and

and reigned peaceably. Letters, ſciences, and arts, were favoured by this uſurper, flouriſhed under his reign, and promoted his dominion. Before J. C.

CYRUS, reign of. His conqueſt of Babylon and erecting a vaſt empire are well known; but as to the particulars of his hiſtory we have no certainty. He is celebrated in ſcripture for reſtoring the Jews, after 70 years captivity. 560.

PYTHAGORAS diſtinguiſhed himſelf. He probably borrowed the groundwork of his philoſophy from the Brachmans. The Indians ſeem to have diffuſed knowledge through the world, though they be little noticed in ancient hiſtory. 532.

CONFUCIUS, the moſt eſtimable of philoſophers, at the ſame time inſtructed the Chineſe in the precepts of virtue. No monarch deſerves ſo well to form an epocha.

ZOROASTER about the ſame time reformed the religion of the Perſians.

BRUTUS. Rome, after being delivered from the tyranny of Tarquin, would have fallen under an ariſtocracy, whoſe yoke is much heavier, if the tribunes of the people had not been eſtabliſhed ſome time after (493.) Athens ſhook off the yoke of the Piſiſtratidæ a year before the expulſion of Tarquin. 509.

MARATHON, battle of, at which the Athenians, commanded by Miltiades, triumphed over the power of Aſia. Their hiſtory becomes at that period a ſeries of heroic actions. Ten years after *Xerxes* was defeated at *Salamis*, where *Ariſtides* and *Themiſtocles* ſignalized themſelves. 490.

ANAXAGORAS began to teach; *Herodotus* wrote; *Sophocles* was forming his genius; *Euripides* was born. Philoſophy, the belles lettres, and fine arts, ſeemed to attend the progreſs of heroiſm.

PERICLES governs Athens: unhappily he corrupted that city as much as he embelliſhed it by the labours of *Phidias*; and that people of brilliant but frivolous genius was ſoon after cruſhed by the Spartans in the Peloponneſian war, which began in 431. The rivalſhip of the two republics, which were formerly united by the common intereſt of Greece, was equally fatal to both. 443.

DECEMVIRS, eſtabliſhed at Rome in 451, in order to form a body of laws, had travelled for that purpoſe into Greece. To that country the Romans were indebted for all their knowledge, as the Greeks drew the elements of their learning from Egypt.

LYSANDER takes Athens, and eſtabliſhes the thirty tyrants. Such was the fruit of the ambitious policy of Pericles and the Peloponneſian war. *Alcibiades*, who had adviſed the unfortunate ſiege of *Syracuſe*, was in exile. 404.

THRASYBULUS delivered Athens. 403.

SOCRATES put to death. His only crimes were the practice of virtue, religion unmixed with ſuperſtition, and zeal for the public good. Modeſt in his philoſophical inquiries, he deſpiſed vain ſcience, and applied himſelf ſolely to the advancement of morals. His death deſerves to form an epocha in the hiſtory of the human mind, a ſubject more intereſting than that of war. 400.

ROME taken by the *Gauls*, and delivered by *Camillus*. Had that people been acquainted with the Roman diſcipline, they would have annihilated that power which a ſhort time after ſubdued all Italy. 390.

EPAMINONDAS defeats the Lacedemonians at *Leuctra*. Thebes, the place of his nativity, enjoyed for ſome time the ſuperiority in Greece. Sparta and Athens were ruined by mutual diſſenſions. Epaminondas was glorioufly ſeconded by *Pelopidas*. After theſe great men, Thebes ſunk again in obſcurity. 371.

PHILIP, king of Macedon, defeats the Thebans and Athenians at the battle of Chæroneæa. This victory enables him to execute the projects of his ambitious policy, and makes him arbiter of Greece, notwithſtanding the invectives of Demoſthenes. Philoſophy was held in ſuch eſteem, that Philip prided himſelf on chooſing Ariſtotle for his ſon's preceptor. 338.

ALEXANDER aſcends the throne of Macedonia, croſſes into Aſia the next year, and the great empire of the Perſians was deſtroyed in 331, at the battle of Arbela. This conqueror died in 324, and his dominions were divided 335.

Before J. C. ed among his generals. The kingdoms of *Syria* and *Egypt* were ſeparated from Macedonia. Some nations ſhook off the yoke, and formed other realms in Aſia.

312. SELEUCUS, one of Alexander's generals, makes himſelf maſter of Babylon. He founds the great kingdom of Syria, of which Antioch became the capital. Ptolemy reigned in Egypt, where the ſciences and arts of Greece ſoon flouriſhed, and the Egyptians became the ſcholars of that nation whoſe inſtructors they had formerly been.

264. FIRST PUNIC WAR.
The Romans, who were always at war with their neighbours, having ſubdued them by dint of perſeverance, diſcipline, and policy, having aggrandized themſelves by degrees, driven Pyrrhus king of Epirus out of Italy, and their ambition increaſing with their ſucceſs, make war againſt the Carthaginians for the dominion of Sicily, ſuddenly raiſe a formidable naval power, croſs into Africa, and, notwithſtanding the defeat of Regulus and ſeveral other diſaſters, dictate the terms of peace in 241.

202. HANNIBAL defeated by Scipio. The ſecond Punic war, begun in 218, had reduced the Romans to extremity, particularly by the battle of Cannæ in 216. Their affairs were in ſome degree reſtored by Fabius and Marcellus; but Scipio's victory at Zama opened a boundleſs field to their ambition; and the whole known world was threatened with ſlavery.

196. PHILIP, king of Macedonia, peace with. The Romans, after their victory, reſtore the Grecian ſtates to their liberty; a falſe moderation, which only tended to rivet their chains.

190. ANTIOCHUS king of Syria defeated by Scipio Aſiaticus. Peace concluded with him on condition of his ceding the whole country to the weſt of Mount Taurus. Rome, now miſtreſs of Aſia, ſoon adopted the effeminate manners of that country.

168. PAULUS EMILIUS defeats *Perſeus* king of Macedonia; that kingdom becomes a Roman province. In the time of Alexander the Macedonians had ſcarce heard the name of Rome.

146. CARTHAGE and CORINTH deſtroyed. Rome ſtood in need of a rival. The ruin of Carthage proved fatal to her, as the curb to licentious paſſions was removed. With Corinth the liberty of Greece was annihilated, of which the Achæan league was a precious relick. Twelve years after, Numantia was likewiſe deſtroyed in Spain.
PLAUTUS and TERENCE had already appeared. The laſt was favoured with the intimacy of Scipio Æmilianus, who deſtroyed Carthage. Taſte and politeneſs began to flouriſh among thoſe deſtroyers of mankind.

133. TIBERIUS GRACCHUS aſſaſſinated by the ſenators. His brother, *Caius Gracchus*, underwent the ſame fate eight years after. The two brothers, in their tribuneſhip, had defended the cauſe of the plebeians, but with more zeal than prudence. The great men, corrupted by their riches, now became oppreſſors of their country. It is a very remarkable circumſtance, that, till the murder of Tiberius Gracchus, no blood had been ſhed in any ſedition.

121. NARBONNE GAUL reduced into the form of a province. When the Romans once got footing in a country, it was to be foreſeen that they would one day ſubdue it entirely.

102. The CIMBRI defeated by *Marius*. This people came from the coaſt of the Baltic, whence iſſued ſo many conquering barbarians. Rome owed her preſervation to the diſcipline of her troops, which was then in full vigour, but was daily neceſſarily enervated by vice. Marius had riſen to the conſulſhip during the war with *Jugurtha*, who had often bribed the ſenators to wink at his crimes.

88. SYLLA and MARIUS, civil war between them. Maſſacres and dreadful proſcriptions, virtue almoſt exploded, the republic torn in pieces and deſtroyed by her own citizens; ſuch were the natural fruits of unbridled ambition. Sylla was named perpetual dictator, and the Romans gave themſelves a maſter. He abdicated.

71. SPARTACUS defeated by *Craſſus*. This leader of revolted ſlaves had gain-

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ed ſeveral victories over the Romans; ſo greatly were they already degenerated, but they ſtill had great generals. Before J. C.

MITHRIDATES defeated by *Pompey*. This celebrated king of Pontus had in the courſe of a long war ſignalized the hatred inſpired by the tyranny of the Romans. Pompey only finiſhed the work of Lucullus. He without any difficulty made himſelf maſter of Cappadocia, Phœnicia, and Syria. 66.

CATILINE's conſpiracy diſcovered by *Cicero* the ſame year. Nothing was ſo much to be dreaded by the republic as the crimes of her own citizens.

TRIUMVIRATE of *Pompey*, *Cæſar*, and *Craſſus*, who ſhared the ſupreme power amongſt them. Every man now thought only of his private intereſt, and to it ſacrificed the public good. 60.

CRASSUS defeated and ſlain by the Parthians. Aſia at laſt finds avengers. The Parthians were warlike enough to ſhake the Roman empire. 53.

CÆSAR makes war againſt *Pompey*. He had juſt finiſhed the conqueſt of Gaul. He could not bear a ſuperiour, nor Pompey an equal, and the rivalſhip between theſe two men brought on the ruin of the ſtate. By the victory at Pharſalia in 48, Cæſar completed the ruin of the republican party. He was made perpetual dictator in 45, and aſſaſſinated the following year. But he was worthy of the ſovereign power, and Rome could no longer be without a maſter. 49.

TRIUMVIRATE of *Anthony*, *Lepidus*, and *Octavius*. This laſt, grand nephew and adopted ſon of Cæſar, made up for his want of courage by profound policy. The triumvirs, infamous by their proſcriptions, perſecuted the remains of liberty, which periſhed with *Brutus* and *Caſſius* at the battle of *Philippi* in 42. 43.

ACTIUM, battle of. Anthony and Octavius having quarrelled, the former was defeated, being hurried away by the flight of Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, his miſtreſs. Octavius reigns under the name of Auguſtus, with the title of emperour. The republic was now only a phantom. 31.

Roman Emperours, till the Eſtabliſhment of the Barbarians in the Empire.

The Chriſtian vulgar era begins with the year of Rome 753, though the moſt learned chronologiſts fix the birth of Chriſt ſome years ſooner. Their opinion is liable to doubts, but not ſo much as the other. However, it is a matter of ſmall importance. We ſhall follow the common reckoning. Year of J. C.

AUGUSTUS. The beginning of his reign is dated from the battle of Actium in the year before Chriſt 31, and ends in the 14th of our era. This artful uſurper, by a mild and pacific government, buried his cruelties and crimes in oblivion. He favoured men of letters, who in return have immortalized his name; but their praiſes are ſuſpected of flattery.

TIBERIUS, a politic, crafty, and cruel tyrant. The *Germans*, who defeated Varus under the laſt reign, repreſſed by *Germanicus*. We ſhall ſee that unconquerable people inceſſantly diſturbing the empire. The violent death of Germanicus was looked upon as one of the crimes committed by Tiberius, whoſe tyranny was completed by his laſt exceſſes in his retirement at Capræa. He was ſmothered by order of the captain of the guards. 14.

CAIUS CALIGULA, worſe than Tiberius——Murdered. 37.

CLAUDIUS, remarkable for his imbecility, and the debaucheries of his conſort Meſſalina; poiſoned by his fourth wife Agrippina. Under this reign Mauritania and Britain made Roman provinces. 41.

NERO, a monſter of vices and tyranny, who murdered his mother, his governour, preceptor, &c. condemned to death by the ſenate after a revolt. 54.

GALBA, OTHO, VITELLIUS; proclaimed by different armies, becauſe the empire depended on the ſoldiers: they were murdered or ſlew themſelves. 68, 69.

VESPASIAN, proclaimed by the army in the Eaſt, dethroned Vitellius, and ſhewed himſelf worthy of the empire. His ſon Titus took Jeruſalem in the year 70: the Jews, by their revolts, drew upon themſelves a vengeance, which they made ſtill more ſevere by their dreadful diſſenſions. 69.

TITUS,

Year of J. C.

TITUS, for his beneficence, the delight of the Romans. Herculaneum and Pompeii buried by the eruption of mount Veſuvius.

81. DOMITIAN, a brutal tyrant; aſſaſſinated. Under this reign *Agricola* ſubdued Britain.

95. NERVA, a good prince, whoſe beſt action was the adopting of Trajan.

98. TRAJAN, a juſt, virtuous emperour, but who ought not to have enlarged the empire by conqueſts. He paſſed the Perſian gulph, and advanced as far as the ocean; however, all he had taken from the Parthians was immediately loſt.

117. ADRIAN, an able emperour, though his conduct was not entirely irreproachable. The Jews exterminated and diſperſed on account of their ſeditions. The empire peaceable and happy, becauſe the emperour ſacrificed the conqueſts that he might attend to the cares of government.

138. ANTONINUS, a true philoſopher, on the throne. His reign, which laſted twenty two years, furniſhes almoſt no materials for hiſtory, which perhaps is one of the beſt proofs of his wiſdom.

161. MARCUS AURELIUS, a perfect model for princes, had he not been ſometimes too indulgent. He vanquiſhed the barbarians in Pannonia, but had not ſufficient reſolution to check his ſon's exceſſes.

180. COMMODUS, odious and deteſtable, though the ſon of Marcus Aurelius.—Aſſaſſinated.

193. PERTINAX, one of the greateſt men that roſe to the empire, ſlain by his ſoldiers ſoon after his acceſſion, becauſe he did not flatter them; they ſell the empire to Didius, who was executed two months after by order of the ſenate; his rival, Septimius Severus, being maſter of Rome.

194. SEVERUS, cruel, but poſſeſſed of great qualities; vanquiſhed the Parthians and Britons, but drew no advantage from thoſe victories.

210. CARACALLA murdered his brother Geta, and tyrannized over his ſubjects; murdered by order of Macrinus, captain of the pretorian guards.

217. MACRINUS, ſlain by the ſoldiers; as was alſo

218. HELIOGABALUS, his ſucceſſor, one of the moſt inſenſate and odious of princes.

222. ALEXANDER, a wiſe and courageous prince, aſſaſſinated by the army, who were diſcontented with his frugality. He made war upon Artaxerxes, who had deſtroyed the empire of the *Parthians*, and again erected that of the *Perſians* on its ruins.

235. MAXIMIN, of Gothic extraction. The ſenate acknowledges other emperours: Maximin and the others murdered by the ſoldiers.

238. GORDIAN vanquiſhes the Perſians; aſſaſſinated by *Philip* (245) who ſucceeds him, and who in a ſhort time is murdered by the ſoldiers.

249. DECIUS, raiſed to the empire by the ſoldiers; ſlain by the Goths, who had paſſed the Danube.

252. GALLUS, aſſaſſinated in the war againſt *Æmilianus*, who was in like manner ſoon murdered by the ſoldiers.

254. VALERIAN. The incurſions of the barbarians become more dreadful. Trebiſond, Chalcedon, and other cities, fall into the hands of the Scythians, or Goths. Valerian was taken priſoner by Sapor, king of Perſia, and died in captivity.

260. GALLIENUS, a bad emperour and unfeeling man. The empire diſtracted more than ever. Uſurpers in Pannonia, Egypt and Gaul, to the number of thirty. Greece and Aſia ravaged by the Goths. Gallienus aſſaſſinated, with his brother, near Milan.

268. CLAUDIUS II. defeats the Goths in a great battle near the Danube; his reign was unhappily too ſhort.

270. AURELIAN, a ſoldier of fortune, celebrated for his victory over *Zenobia*, widow of Odenatus king of Palmyra, who aimed at the empire of the Eaſt. He cleared Italy of the barbarians who ravaged it. Notwithſtanding his great actions, he was murdered by conſpirators.

275. TACITUS, elected by the ſenate, and worthy of the throne, but aſſaſſinated.

276. PROBUS, a native of Pannonia, elected by the troops; revived the glory of the Roman name by his expeditions into Gaul, into Illyria againſt the Go-

tæ, into Aſia againſt the Perſians, into Egypt, and into Thrace. He was ſlain by the ſoldiers, whom he prudently employed in uſeful labours in the time of peace. Year of J. C. 282.

CARUS, CARINUS and NUMERIANUS, momentary reigns. 284.

DIOCLESIAN, a Dalmatian, the enfranchiſed ſlave of a ſenator, but poſſeſſed of the qualities of a great prince. In order to make head againſt the barbarians, who attacked the empire on all ſides, he ſhared the ſovereign authority with Maximian; and the two emperours named each a Cæſar. They both abdicated in 304. The Cæſars, *Conſtantius Chlorus* and *Galerius*, ſucceeded. Diocleſian, happy in his retreat, would never reſume the imperial dignity; but his moderation was not imitated by Maximian.

CONSTANTINE, ſon of Conſtantius Chlorus, who had governed Gaul with prudence. In 312 he defeated the uſurper Maxentius; deprived the emperour *Licinius* of his dominions, and put him to death. He tranſferred the ſeat of the empire to Byzantium, to which he gave the name of *Conſtantinople*. He favoured and embraced Chriſtianity; but the diviſions among Chriſtians began to break out with violence. The ſchiſm of the Donatiſts, and the quarrels of Arianiſm, were an inexhauſtible ſource of miſchiefs, for which Conſtantine could find no remedy. The firſt general council held at Nice in 325, where the divinity of Jeſus Chriſt was acknowledged; the Arians, who combated it, multiplied every day. 306.

CONSTANTINE II. CONSTANTIUS and CONSTANS, ſons of Conſtantine, divide the empire. Conſtantius ſole emperour in 350. By favouring the Arians, he made religious diſputes more dangerous. The Germans fell upon Gaul, but were repulſed by *Julian*, who had been created Cæſar, and governed that country with prudence. He was proclaimed emperour by his army. Conſtantius died while marching againſt him. 337.

JULIAN, by his hatred againſt Chriſtianity, tarniſhed the luſtre of his abilities and virtues; he was miſled by an extravagant philoſophy. He died heroically in an unſucceſsful expedition againſt the Perſians. 361.

JOVIAN re-eſtabliſhed Chriſtianity with prudence. 363.

VALENTINIAN I. elected by the troops, aſſociated his brother Valens in the empire, who perſecuted the Catholics. *Gratian* ſucceeded his father Valentinian in 367. The Goths ſettled in Thrace, and ſoon after threatened Conſtantinople. Valens was defeated by thoſe barbarians, and loſt his life in 378. 364.

THEODOSIUS. Gratian, having promoted him to the empire, committed to him the government of the Eaſt. His zeal for religion ſoon diſplayed itſelf. He repulſed the barbarians; and, after the death of Valentinian II. emperour of the Weſt, who was aſſaſſinated in 393, re-united the whole empire. 379.

ARCADIUS in the Eaſt, and HONORIUS in the Weſt. Every thing fell to decay under thoſe two ſons of Theodoſius, who were weak princes, void of genius. Religious diſputes obliterated all regard for the intereſts of the empire, and the barbarians took the advantage. The ſame misfortunes under Theodoſius II. Valentinian III. &c. 395.

Eſtabliſhment of the Barbarians in the Empire.

VANDALS, ALANS, and SUEVI, after ravaging Gaul, make themſelves maſters of Spain. 409.

GOTHS take Rome the following year, under their king *Alaric*, a great man, who might have reigned in Italy if he had pleaſed. 410.

BURGUNDIANS ſettled in Gaul; the Francs ſome years afterwards. 413.

ATTILA, king of the *Huns*, ravages the Eaſt and Weſt, while *Genſeric*, king of the Vandals, peaceably enjoys the conqueſt of Africa.

SAXONS and ANGLES ſubdue Britain about the middle of the fifth century.

ODOACER, king of the Heruli, deſtroys the empire of the Weſt in the reign of *Auguſtulus*. 476.

THEODORIC, king of the *Oſtrogoths*, dethrones Odoacer, and reigns gloriouſly in Italy.

VISIGOTHS,

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Year of J. C. 485. VISIGOTHS, poſſeſſed Spain and part of Gaul; where they had eſtabliſhed themſelves a little after Alaric.

CLOVIS lays the foundation of the French monarchy.

ITALY and AFRICA reconquered by Juſtinian's generals; but the firſt of theſe countries was ſubdued in the reign of his ſucceſſor Juſtin II. by Alboinus, king of the Lombards, in 568.

ARABIANS, who had been ſubjected by *Mahomet*, diſmembered the Roman empire with incredible rapidity after his death, which happened in 632.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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